

# PLEASURES AND PRIVILEGES OF THE PEN

BY

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## To the Reader

In compiling and publishing the present volume, I have fulfilled a long cherished personal desire. I may even call it an ambition.

For the last ten years and more I have come into personal contact from day to day with my father's literary tastes and pursuits; and I may be easily excused if I confessed to a kind of partiality and fascination for his literary productions, both English and Marathi. I have always tried to separate in my mind the literary aspect of his writings and speeches from the political aspect of them. For I believe that much of the topical political thought and style of expression of any prominent personality is naturally of a passing or transient character, while the literary aspect of it is bound to be more or less permanent or of a comparatively abiding character. I, therefore, always looked forward to an opportunity of giving portions of his writings and speeches, selected mainly from this point of view, a suitable bookform. For what is embodied in this form has natural advantages towards finding a place on the shelf or in the almira of a private or public library.

I succeeded in using many past opportunities as they afforded themselves to me, for bringing out such of my father's literary productions in Marathi as have secured a nitch in the mind of the Marathi reading public, as much as a place in the Marathi library.

As for his English writings, I have already brought out two volumes, (1) Landmarks of Lokamanya's Life, and

(2) *A passing Phase of Politics*, being a history of the non-co-operation movement from 1920 to 1923. But there was much other material from which a selection and compilation could be made of his English writings, spread over a space of thirty years and more, dealing with quite a variety of topics, mainly non-political, and at least non-topical where political. And the present volume is the result of such selection and compilation.

*In the first part I have brought together a number of personal tributes paid by my father to several famous personalities; and they are naturally in the nature of obituary notices or commemorative contributions. In the second part I have included his essays and criticisms and other allied matters. In the fourth part I have included some of his inaugural addresses and speeches, read or delivered as president of an occasional conference, or as a member of the Legislative Assembly, or as a casual speaker at public meetings.*

It will be noticed that I had originally intended to include in this volume also one other section which would have been 'Part 3,' containing some select political articles written by my father as Editor of the *Mahratta* or as an occasional contributor to magazines. But I had to omit that section altogether; because in the process of printing I found that that section would extend from three to four hundred pages, even if I included only the more notable among them. But the volume so completed would far exceed the limits I had fixed for this book as a suitable or presentable volume.

When I asked my father for a title for this volume, he suggested the present one, namely "*Pleasures and Pri-*



vilages of the Pen." This alliterative combination of words is fully expressive from the point of view from which my father, I know, has looked at his literary pursuits all his life. But it also supplies to me a suitable expression to focus my own point of view of this publication. For it has been a pleasure and a privilege to me to compile and publish this volume, as it has been a pleasure and a privilege to my father to pen its contents.

Poona,  
20th June, 1927.

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Kashinath N. Kelkar

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N. C. Kelkar.

**BOOK I**

**TRIBUTES TO GREAT PERSONAGES**



# Tributes to Great Personages

## Gautama Buddha

IT is just 2500 years since Lord Gautama Buddha attained the status of a Bodhi. And his anniversary is being celebrated in India, Burma, Japan, China, and other places where Buddhism is to-day a living religion and a spiritual force, in which millions of souls have found their comfort and solace. Asia is rightly regarded as the home and birth-place of religion and philosophy. Mahomedanism traces its origin to the Asiatic soil. Christianity is also a child of the Asiatic clime. Hinduism, with its teeming millions in India, is essentially an Asiatic religion. Buddhism also owes its origin to Asia, where it has the largest number of its followers. The people of the world might look back on Asia as the land of their common heritage, as the land that gave all the great religions to mankind. And if to-day there is a religious force which can hold together the scattered peoples of the Asiatic continent, a force by means of which they can stand or meet on common ground amidst the warring elements of passions, ambitions, prejudices and material interests, it is the great force of Buddhism.

India has special reason to be a participator in this 2500th anniversary, as she claims to be the land of Buddha's birth. The incidents of Buddha's life are a common matter of history, and present the severe struggle and strife of the soul after elevation, which characterises the life of almost every great teacher of truth and religion. Born as a royal prince, at Kapilvastu on the slopes of the Himalayas, Gautama had nothing wanting to make life smooth and

dealing with actual life Buddha did not omit the civic virtues necessary for a member of society. Speaking of the Vajji, a mighty people, whom Buddha taught the principle of social order, he said — "So long as the Vajji hold their full and frequent assemblies, they may be expected not to decline, but to prosper." He laid great emphasis on holding full frequent assemblies, "meeting in concord, rising in concord, and attending in concord to the affairs of the Sangha."

Buddhism had a large following in India till Shankaracharya appeared on the scene and refused the doctrines of Buddhist philosophy. Though Buddhism as a creed and a sect has to-day no great following in India, its influence on the society has been immense, especially in the fellow-feeling and charity which marks out the Hindus from the rest of the world. Buddhism is an off-shoot of Hinduism, a specialization of some of its doctrines, a specialization which was perhaps justified by the circumstances under which Buddhism originated and grew. As time went on, Buddhism evolved various creeds and sects, which have strong differences between them. As is the case in most religions, the Buddhists of to-day have beliefs and doctrines which appear to be far away from pristine Buddhism. But all through them there is the common factor of the essential tenets of the teachings of Buddha. Buddhism is special exaltation of certain doctrines of Hindu philosophy, and is even at the worst a rebel child of Hinduism. Like some of the modern growths in Hinduism, Buddhism does not claim solid adherence to Hinduism but all through it breathes the atmosphere, the sentiments, and the spirit of Hinduism. India can legitimately claim affinity with the Buddhist nations of Asia, *e. g.* Japan, China, Ceylon, Siam and Tibet, through the religious bonds of Buddhism. If the nations of the West, whose religious differences are so

wide, as to verge from strong faith to atheism, can claim to be called Christian, the Buddhist nations certainly have better claims to be reckoned as Hindus, though time and tide have slightly blurred the connection between the two. (14-5-1911)

### Shri Ramdas

Of all the saints in Maharashtra who worked up the religious upheaval before the rise of the Maratha power, Ramdas occupies a unique position. He combined in his teaching the highest philosophy of Vedanta along with the sagacity of the man of the work-a-day world. The other saints talked poetry of Bhakti and their one aim was to lead the mind to Salvation—Mukti—by harping upon the illusory nature of the mundane existence. Ramdas too dwelt upon the attainment of Brahma, but at the same time insisted upon the rigid discipline necessary for that purpose. He afforded no short cut or royal road to be merged in Brahma. The principles which he taught were the highest principles of the pure Vedanta of Shankaracharya, but he taught along with them their application and use in life. In this lies his unique greatness. To take a principle, and apply it to surrounding objects in all its bearings, to subject it to the minutest analysis in order to perceive its true nature,—if this is the function of a scientist, then we might freely say that nowhere was this *scientific spirit* evident in such luxuriance as in Ramdas. He preached the highest philosophy but taught the people how to put it into practice in their lives. If any one wishes to see the daring lengths to which our saints went in their analysis of metaphysical questions, he can do no better than peruse the works of Ramdas.

specially the *Dasabodha*. He studied, in its minutest details, the action and reaction between physics and metaphysics, philosophy and facts: he harmonized Vedanta and life. He combined in himself the utilitarian spirit of the present day and the sublime philosophy of the Upanishads. He is the most practical of the saints. In his works you find instructions given from the rudimentary lesson in dictation and hand-writing to the highest developments of Yoga and complete emancipation of the Jivatma.

Ramdas was a devotee of Shri Ram and during his time built many Maths for the propagation of his order, the Ramdasi Panth. His disciples, who were sturdy both in their body and faith in their principles, went about the country, scattering broad-cast the precious teaching imparted by their Guru. A strong physique, firm faith in one's religion, a constant desire to learn, purity of life, high ideals, plain living, self-abnegation in order to serve the cause of the people,—be it religion, politics, or philanthropy—and, above all, a burning desire to raise the people to a higher place of existence,—these were some of the traits which a Ramdasi was to possess. The three cardinal tenets of Ramdas were—first and most important, the worship of Hari and spread of Dharma by word or deed; secondly, service to people by partaking in politics or public life; and thirdly, awakening consciousness all round. To call out the best in man, in whatever station in life he may be, and to use it for the propagation of Dharma which was the greatest good in life, was the sum and substance of what Ramdas taught. He was not quite the boneless lump of flesh, the sneak and mellowly saint whose saintliness is only a garb to hide his want of self-confidence, that some of his new followers try to make him out to be. Neither did he give

his adherents a charter to minister fully to their senses, under the ochre-coloured Chhati on their person. Ramdas was a disciplinarian in the strictest sense of the term, and his lashes fall sharpest and severest on those who, reckless of their race, religion or Varna, make the satisfaction of the passions the end and aim of their life. The Neo-Ramdasis who hunt out verses from Ramdas to pander to *their own* creed of expediency, are no better than the Devil who can cite scripture for his purpose. The true nature of the religious upheaval of which Ramdas was the most potent exponent and partaker is delineated by the late Mr. Justice Ranade in his "Rise of the Maratha Power." He sums up as follows:—"It tended in all these ways to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity both of thought and action, and prepared it in a way no other nation in India was prepared to take the lead in re-establishing a united native power in the place of foreign dominion." Those who hold that the saints of Maharashtra had nothing to do with the politics of the day, entirely misapprehend the facts. Says Mr. Ranade: "Political leaders acted in concert with religious leaders of the people. Shivaji's chief adviser was Ramdas, who gave the colour to the national flag and introduced a new form of salutation which displayed at once the religious character of the movement and the independence of the spirit which prompted it." The religious fervour bordering on self-abnegation, and the self-discipline found so remarkably in Shivaji were the reflections of his Guru's teachings. Mahomedan intolerance disturbed the Dharma of the people, and, therefore, had to be repelled or quelled, and this could not be done except by united opposition. Ramdas put this conception tersely when he wrote to Shivaji's son "to unite all who were Marathas and pro-

## Swami Vivekanand

" Money can procure bread and butter only; do not consider, therefore, as if it were thy sole end and aim. "

" Gurus can be had by the hundred; but good chelas (disciples) are very rare. "

" The moth once seeing the light never returns to darkness, the ant dies in the sugar-heap but never retreats therefrom. Similarly a good devotee gladly sacrifices his life for his God by renunciation. "

( *Sayings of Ramkrishna.* )

The above three sayings of Shri Ramkrishna Paramahansa were among those that struck me as characteristic of the age when some time ago I read, for the first time, his biography written by the late Prof. Max Muller. And they may be said to epitomise the suggestion which the late Swami Vivekanand's life makes to the large and admiring world, he last week left behind him. For it is surely the Swami's choice of the ideal of a spiritual as opposed to a material life, his successful attempt to wear Ramkrishna's mantle and to deserve it, and his great renunciation are the three key-notes of his short and sweet life. There is perhaps one more idea which has been carried out by Swami Vivekanand, though it does not appear to have formed the subject of any of his Guru's sayings; and it is that a sage should use patriotism as a fulcrum for the operation of his spiritual power and *tapas*. It is this last, perhaps, which made the difference between the practical aspect of the life of the great sage and his illustrious disciple; for whereas Shri Ramkrishna personally realised supreme bliss in a spiritual trance, Swami Vivekanand realised it in superinducing something like a trance of enchantment upon his fellow-countrymen, by the magic of eloquent preaching with a view to rouse them into patriotic action.

In Swami Vivekanand, therefore, we lose a patriot-sage who deserves a foremost rank among the national workers of the present age. Of the life-story of this extraordinary man, the facts are as well known as they are few. His original name was Narendra Nath Dutt. He was born in a Kayastha family and like hundreds of other common *alumni* of the University, he was educated in an English fashion, and graduated himself in the usual course of things. It was, of course, predicted of him by an astrologer, even in his young age, that he would never enter the path of Grihasthashram or wordly life. But such a prediction could not then mean anything perhaps except a vague sort of despair to his mother who probably, like most mothers, looked forward to his becoming a pleader or a clerk, earn living and support a family. There is also no record to show what idea the Swami himself had of his future. All that is known is that his acquaintance with Shri Ramkrishna Paramahansa discovered to them both a vast but latent fund of spiritual potentiality in the boy Narendra, and the Guru's blessings and affection soon settled the course of the disciple's future. He resolved to renounce a wordly career, and to devote all his powers and energies to go forth preaching the gospel of *practical vedantism*.

He then seriously studied and practised Yoga; and as preliminary to a career of a preaching hermit, he travelled to all parts of India, and especially in the Himalayan regions, where he expected to meet with *Siddhas* or *Tapasvins* of ancient date. As he had occasion to incidentally relate later on in his lectures, Swami Vivekanand could, in these travels, learn to nerve his constitution for physical hardships. He describes himself then as "a man who had met starvation face to face for fourteen years of life, had not known what to eat the next day and where to sleep, a man

who dared to live, where the thermometer registered thirty degrees below zero, almost without clothes." It was during these travels that the Swami chanced to come to Poona, where he put up with Mr. Tilak, and proceeded to Mahabaleshwar, from where the fair weather visitors that year brought back with them impressions about a highly educated Swami who "talked beautiful philosophy." In the course of these travels, he visited Madras where he was being induced to deliver his first public lecture but steadily refused to do so. But the *elite* of the Madras public was charmed by his conversation; and it was at Madras that the Swami's resolve to go to America to preach Vedanta assumed a definite shape and also received encouragement and support. The announcement of the gathering of the Parliament of the world's religions also coincided with the above events, and though, as the Swami himself told a Calcutta audience in 1897, "his mission in America was not for the Parliament of religions, but that it was only some thing in the way, an opening, an opportunity," still the Parliament was his immediate objective when he sailed to America in 1892; and it was also at this Parliament that he first made himself famous.

It is now well-known how successful was the Swami's performance on the platform of the Parliament of the world's religions at Chicago. His appearance there was the bursting of the Vedantic bomb-shell among the mob of Christian sects and the charm of his personal magnetism proved so potent, that even opponents could not have helped liking him. The *New York Critic* certified that "the most impressive figure of the Parliament was Swami Vivekanand. No one expressed so well the spirit of the Parliament as did the Hindu monk. He is an orator by divine right." The *Iowa State Register* had the following :—"During his stay in the city which was happily prolonged, Vivekanand



met many of the best people in the city who found their time well spent in discussing religious and metaphysical questions with him. But woe to the man who undertook to combat the monk on his own ground, and that was where they all tried it who tried it at all. His replies came like flashes of lightning and the venturesome questioner was sure to be impaled on the Indian's shining intellectual lance. The working of his mind, so subtle and so brilliant, so well stored and so well trained, sometimes dazzled his hearers; but it was always a most interesting study. Vivekanand and his cause found a place in the hearts of all true Christians."

Encouraged by his reception, Swami Vivekanand found it easy to carry out his plan of establishing a school for teaching Vedanta to the Americans, and the fruits of persistent teaching for two years were to be seen in the many converts to Hinduism that he made in the ranks of Christian ladies and gentlemen. In 1896 the Swami visited England, where he met and was entertained by Prof. Max Muller; and here we have the first-hand appreciation of the great European sage by the Indian sage. Writing to the *Bramhavaradin* of Madras in June 1896, he thus paints Prof. Max Muller:—"That nice little house surrounded by a beautiful garden, the silver-headed sage with a face calm and benign, and a forehead smooth as a child's in spite of seventy winters, and every line in that face speaking of a deep-seated mine of spirituality somewhere behind, the trees, the flowers, the calmness of the clear sky, all these sent me back in imagination to the glorious day of ancient India, the day of Brahmacharins and our Rajarshis,—the days of our *Arundhati* and *Vasistha*." Max Muller had by this time published his article on Ramkrishna in the *Nineteenth Century* under the heading of "a great Mahatma;" and the Professor, full of Ramkrishnaism for the moment was.

naturally very pleased to enjoy Swami Vivekanand's company; for as he himself expressed it "it is not every day, that one meets a disciple of Ramkrishna Paramahansa ! "

On returning to India, the Swami, with the assistance of his American disciples, proceeded to establish a Math, which he ultimately did at Almora in the deep snows of the Himalaya. Latterly another Math was established at Bellur, on the river Hoogly, where at last the whilom Calcutta boy rested himself from the troubles of a preacher's life after winning a world-wide fame and firmly establishing a new school of spiritual progress combined with practical usefulness.

As regards the Swami's creed, it is well known that he was a Vedantin. He preached *Adwait*; but he was not a bigoted *adwaiti*, for he regarded that both the *duait* and the *adwaita* schools had their own use. As he explained in an address on "the Vedanta in its application to Indian life" at Madras, "the *dualist* and the *adwaitist* need not fight each other. Each has a place and a great place in the national life. The *dualist* must remain; he is as much part and parcel of the national religious life as the *adwaitist*. One cannot exist without the other; one is the fulfilment of the other; one is the building, the other is the top; the one the root, the other the fruit." He regarded Vedanta from the practical point of view, and though himself a follower of Shankaracharya, he did not hesitate to prefer Ramanuja in certain respects. "Shankara with his great intellect," says he, "had not, I am afraid, as great a heart. Ramanuja's heart was greater. He felt for the down-trodden, he sympathised with them. He took up the ceremonies, the accretions that had gathered, made them pure so far as could be, and instituted new ceremonies, new methods of worship for the people who absolutely required these. At the same time he opened the door to highest

spiritual worship from the Bramhin to the Pariah." He himself was for popularising religious knowledge and worship. In his address on "The future of India," the Swami expressed his intentions as follows:—

"My idea is first of all to bring out these gems of spirituality that are as it were stored up in our books and in the possession of a few, hidden, as it were in the monasteries and the forests; not only the knowledge from the hands where it is hidden, but the still more inaccessible chest, the language in which it was preserved, the incrustations of the centuries of Sanskrit words."

He did not want, however, to degrade Sanskrit, for Sanskrit was to him equivalent to "Prestige." His idea to bring spiritual knowledge in the forum also did not originate in his hate for the Brahmin. Far from it, he did not want to bring down the Brahmins, but to raise the non-Brahmins up. His solution of the caste problem was "to bring about the *levelling ideas* of caste by making the other castes appropriate the culture and education which is the strength of the highest caste." The ideal according to him at one end is the Brahmin, and the ideal at the other end is the Chandala, and the whole work is to raise the Chandala up to the Brahmin. Of course, the days of exclusive privileges and exclusive claims are gone, and it is the duty of the Brahmin, therefore, to work for the salvation of the rest of mankind in India, and to stick to his spiritual ideals.

As to the means of improving the condition of the people and creating a spirit of nationality in India, he held well-defined views; and spiritual enthusiast that he was, he looked at every thing through religion. Thus in his lecture on "My plan of campaign," delivered at Madras, the Swami maintained that "in India, social reform has to be preached by showing how much more spiritual a life the new system will bring, and politics has to be preached

by showing how much it will give the one thing the nation wants *viz.*, spirituality." On another occasion he said "Not only it is true that the ideal of religion is the highest ideal; in case of India it is the only possible ideal of work; work in any other line, without first strengthening this, would be disastrous."

But he was not content with preaching the cause of spiritualism in India. It was his ambition to carry his mission to distant lands, and in this respect he excelled the greatest Bengalee reformer—we mean, Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He felt inspired by a noble ambition of retaliating upon those who had so long taken the aggressive and encroached upon the domain of Hinduism. He had a double purpose in view that could be, in his opinion, served by Indians going out to foreign countries. "We cannot do" he said "without the world outside India. It was our foolishness that we thought we could, and we have paid the penalty by about a thousand years' slavery. All such foolish ideas that Indians must not go out of India, are childish. They must be knocked on the head; the more you go out and travel among the nations of the world the better for you and your country." Again—

"The sign of life is expansion; we must go out, expand, show life or degrade, fester and die; there is no other alternative." But there was also another reason why we should go out. "Nations with their political lives have foreign policies. When they find too much quarrelling at home they look for somebody abroad to quarrel with and the quarrel at home stops. Our foreign policy, however, can be for the present only spiritual and not political. Our policy must be to go abroad and preach the truth of our Shastras to the nations of the world. It is by carrying out this foreign policy that we could do our sacred duty of imparting spiritual knowledge to others as well as win-

their respect for ourselves. We will not be students always but teachers also. There cannot be friendship without equality and there cannot be equality when one party is always the teacher and the other party always sits at the feet. If you want to become equal with the Englishman or the American, you will have to teach as well as to learn, and you have plenty yet to teach to the world for centuries to come."

• The Indians are a conquered people, yet they have their own conquests to make. "The gift of India is the gift of religion and philosophy, wisdom and spirituality; and religion does not want cohorts to march before its path and clear its way. Wisdom and philosophy do not want to be carried on torrents of blood. They do not march upon bloody human bodies, do not march with violence but come on the wings of peace and love. Like the gentle dew that falls unseen and unheard and yet brings into blossom the fairest of roses, so has been the contribution of India to the thought of the world...I am an imaginative man and my idea is the conquest of the whole world by the Hindu race." He bitterly felt that India had completely degenerated, and his idea of curing her was to make her recognise that in spiritualism lay her strength and what was wanted was only faith in herself. The difference between the Englishman and the Indian he explained by saying that the Englishman believed in himself, whereas the Indian did not. "He believes in his being an Englishman and he can do anything he likes. You have been told and taught that you can do nothing, and non-entities you are becoming every day." That his diagnosis of the disease was correct, he amply proved by his own action and example. For, it is due to him that the seed of Vedantism has been sown in the American soil and the name of India is being respected in that distant land.

The few selections, that we have given above at random from his several speeches, will at once shew the great breadth of the Swami's views and the intense spiritual patriotism that he felt. Can the death of such a man be regarded as anything less than a national calamity? We really doubt whether the last century produced another man within whom such true patriotism was combined with such religious fervour. Bengal produced Ram Mohun Roy and Keshub Chander Sen, who in their own way attempted to introduce the light of the East into the West. Ram Mohun Roy possessed the gift of genius in a better measure and Keshub was a far more cultured man than Swami Vivekanand. But none of them succeeded so well as the Swami in pushing the campaign of aggressive Vedantism into the hearts of the Europeans and the Americans. Possibly the Swami came on the scene when the ground was better prepared for him by rationalising scientists who have rudely shaken Christian belief, but possibly also the Swami possessed that dash and that intense love for Hinduism, which both Ram Mohun Roy and Keshub Chander Sen lacked. The latter, it is notorious, leaned dangerously towards Christianity and the strength of the former lay rather in exposing the defects of Hinduism. Naturally enough, therefore, none of them succeeded in getting a hold over the popular mind; and though they won admiration from Europeans, they could not make Hinduism as much respected as it is to-day owing to the efforts of Swami Vivekanand.

The Swami's career has been brief, and like a meteor of the first magnitude, he lighted up the face of his country and went down the horizon--all within ten short years. It is men like him that our country needs most at the present time; and though he is gone, the glory of his example will, we trust, remain long behind him. (13-7-1902)

the scene ; and though his individual efforts to solve the problem could affect the situation only to a limited degree, still the advance of his attractive and successful teaching happily ran upon a course concurrent with the perceptible advance of that emancipation. The Russian people were not, therefore, entirely wrong if they attributed part of the betterment of their own lot to Tolstoy's efforts ; and the veneration and popularity in which they held him was not altogether undeserved. Tolstoy's career again was not free from those incidents which invest it with an aspect of martyrdom. His gospel, if we carefully analyse it, will not be found to contain anything extraordinary in the sense of its never having occurred to any one of his class before. Much of his teaching is made up of the common-places of universal hereditary proverbial morality. But it was certainly extraordinary in this sense that, under the peculiar conditions which obtained in Russia in his time, people could not have expected to find an average man among themselves—a chip from their own block—to shout out those common-places from the house-top with that grim determination, that moral frenzy, that serene contempt for authority, political as well as clerical, and that sublime scorn of consequence which Tolstoy exhibited to the wonderment of the gaping millions of his admirers.

He had to pass through the baptism of clerical persecution. He preached freedom from clerical authority and for this unpardonable sin of his, the Holy Synod excommunicated him. Freedom from clerical authority did not certainly mean abandonment of Christian principles. But in Russia as in every other country, the priests are intensely human, and jealous of Tolstoy's onslaught upon the stronghold of their privileges, they put a ban upon him by way of punishment. They were no doubt generous enough to offer him an ignominious

*locus penitentiae* ; they would remove the ban upon him if he would forswear his principles, eat the humble pie and repent of his daring. But if Tolstoy had cared for his personal salvation he might have been induced to avail himself of the offer and readjust himself in relation to the clergy and might have also secured perhaps a greater slice of their favour than before. But Tolstoy cared more for the salvation of the Russian society as a whole, and instead of withdrawing from the position he had taken, he appealed from the clergy to the Tsar and the public. His protest against the clergy assumed the form of an open letter to the Tsar and in this he was incidentally led to a full and formal statement of the practical reforms which he had adumbrated in his mind for the emancipation of the Russian people from political and religious serfdom. This was apparently a false step ; for, owing to the publicity which his views thus received and which naturally gave offence to the Tsar and more especially to the proud possessors of power around him, far from propitiating the clergy, he, on the contrary, offended the Tsar and added one enemy to another. But caution and prudence were the least part of Tolstoy's peculiar endowments. He only welcomed the result of the lead beyond the purpose which he had unconsciously secured. The political ban followed religious excommunication, but all that served to make the object of this needless and senseless persecution only the more popular, and Tolstoy's views spread far and wide with a momentum with which his own unaided intellectual zeal or moral fervour could not have possibly backed them. To add to all this, the peculiar tenor of his life gave Tolstoy's propaganda an extra advantage. Born of the people, there should really be no wonder that he lived among the people and participated in



their common life. But plain-living always invests the liver with a halo of heroic divinity when it is accompanied by high-thinking. And so it happened that the mere fact that Tolstoy lived among the peasant and like a peasant, made him immensely attractive to the great peasant population who began to look upon him as almost a divine deliverer sent to them from the High. In the city he preached, but in the country he practised his philosophy; and so his preaching had very great effect. In fact, few people knew Tolstoy when during one portion of the year he used to live in Moscow utilising his writer for perfecting his ideals revising his manuscripts and correcting his proof-sheets. But he was seen visited, talked to and admired most when he used to set a practical example of his preaching and exalt the cause of humble labour as a worker in the field, as a herdsman, a shoe-maker, or a school master.

And what is it after all, that Tolstoy preached in his address to the people and insisted upon in his address to the rulers? The answer may perhaps be briefly given in two words—freedom and enlightenment. The starting assumption of his philosophy was that men as a whole cannot desire discord and enmity but would always prefer to live in concord and peace with their fellowmen. If they seem to be disturbed, they are so only because they are refused freedom and enlightenment. The responsibility for this rested on rulers who selfishly kept both these from the people. It is only this which divides men in two conflicting camps. For the Russian peasantry who formed the bulk of the Russian population he claimed equal rights with all other classes of the people and advocated the abolition of all rules and laws and institutions which had the effect of unduly restricting the peasants in their relation to the world. Then he advocated the abolition of special defence and martial law, on the ground that the cessation

of the ordinary laws develops secret reports and espionage, encourages coarse violence directed against the labouring classes. He advocated the abolition of corporal punishment. He advocated the abolition of restraints upon education, and religious freedom. It was not thus Tolstoy's own fault if his criticism seemed to be rather destructive, but it was really unfair to characterise his criticism as destructive simply because he insisted in effect upon so many don'ts. But it would be a mistake to suppose that Tolstoy was capable only of declamation and denunciation; he could suggest practical details as well as lay down general principles. He believed in Government as an institution and recognised that even the most necessary and urgent reforms could be introduced only in convenient instalments. If he seemed dead set against the Russian Government of his time, it was because that Government was, in his opinion, carried on by mere brute force, and government by force, he hated of all things on earth. It was because of this force that things went so wrong in Russia. "Again murders" he would say, "again street slaughters, again there will be executions, again terror, again false accusations, threats and spite on the one hand, and again hatred, the desire for vengeance and readiness for self-sacrifice on the other." And he would plaintively and pathetically exclaim "Why should this be so? Why, when it is so easy to avoid it?" But though he condemned Government by force, he equally condemned opposition by force to a bad Government. His maxim was not "repel force by force" but "repel force by love." He went perhaps even further. He preached against going to law and law courts too. His remedy against force and crime was essentially Christian. "We judge not, neither do we go to law, because to him who smites the right cheek we feel bound to turn the left; and for evil re-

ceived, to return good. If one of our brethren commits a crime his conscience will torture him more ruthlessly and more justly than the sentence of a judge or the action of an executioner." Those who read this will naturally feel surprised at the treatment he received from the Russian Government. But they do not remember that no human Government sincerely likes criticism and condemnation and that the Russian Government likes it least of all.

(7-11-1910)

### Schiller—The Prophet of Freedom

The German nation recently performed the centenary celebration over the death of Schiller on the 29 instant. On that day in 1805 one of the greatest of Germany's poets shuffled off his mortal coil. His work, however, remained behind him, and his grateful nation paid only a due debt of honour to the memory of one who by his dramas and poetry created a romantic ideal of Freedom that stood them in good stead not long after his death in their war of liberation. The popular celebrations in honour of the centenary came off, we are told, with great eclat all through Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The German-Ladies-Schiller-Society alone collected 2,50,000 Marks for Schiller memorial; and Count Von Bulow, as representing the State, ordered ten thousand copies of Schiller's best drama for distribution to school boys abroad. To Indian school boys it will be enough to be told that the German poet was the celebrated author of 'William Tell', a drama, with the selections from and the spirit of which they have all been familiar through their School Readers. The story of the Swiss archer, who refused to bow to the

Jesler's cap set up in the market place of Altorf and who cut the apple on his son's head with an unerring aim is one of the few which he knows and likes very well. And thanks to the generosity of our educational authorities, though Shivaji may be tabooed out of their school textbooks, the Royal and other readers which happen to contain selections from Schiller's *William Tell*, are not yet absolutely forbidden, so that the boys may get some reflected light at least from the story of a foreign patriot and hero. The wholesale distribution of Schiller's '*William Tell*' among school boys by order of the state shows in what light is the value of the influence of the national poets upon young minds regarded in Germany.

Schiller was born in 1759. From the childhood he was partial to imagination. In early age he wrote the startling play of '*The Robbers*' and gave up his service as a regimental doctor. From the year 1783 he began regularly to earn a living by his poetic talents. He was an ardent advocate of the theatre as an agency of help to the laws of a nation for the support of morality and civic virtues. At one time Schiller thought of forsaking poetry for law, but was in the nick of time encouraged with pecuniary support by a friend, who was himself a nobleman of fine literary taste, and induced him to stick to a literary profession. Through the influence of Goethe, who is well known as perhaps the greatest poet that Germany ever produced, Schiller later on obtained an appointment as Professor of History at the University of Jena. It was at this University that such men as Woltmann, Schelling, Hegel, Schlegel, the brothers Humboldt were collected together; and it was here that the Romantic school of German literature being formed, the desire for national unity and independence was fostered and ultimately resulted in the war of liberation. Schiller's lectures at the University

were very popular and the students, it is said, gave a 'Serenade' to cheer the new Professor. In 1794 Schiller issued the prospectus of a new literary-journal and invited the aid of contributors including Goethe, Herder, Kant and others. The next year Schiller and Goethe together wrote several epigrams by way of satire upon the degenerated taste of the time, and they offended many literary men who were till then used to mutual adulation. Differing in most circumstances of life and temperament, Goethe and Schiller continued to be fast friends till the latter's death. Literary men of Schiller's time had begun to dream dreams of liberty, and students at Universities had amused themselves by planting dead "trees of liberty." But to Schiller in particular is the German nation grateful for having turned his Muse towards national freedom at the very midnight hour of degradation. It was a theme which had inspired most of his plays, but in his "William Tell" was a perfect ideal of national liberty finally embodied.

Fredrich Vischer, in his oration on the occasion of the centenary celebration of Schiller's birth-date in 1859, is reported to have observed as follows:—"Thousands who trembled not when the earth groaned under the weight of the despot's mailed cavalry; men who with fearless hearts confronted the thunders of his artillery; thousands, who fell to be mingled with the ensanguined soil on so many battle-fields—all carried with them into the struggle the enthusiasm by Schiller's poetry; his songs were on their lips and his spirit fought along with them. And if the time came again when such sacrifices shall be demanded for their fatherland, for morals and laws for truth—the poetry of Schiller shall once more inspire us and his burning words shall be our battle-cry." The words of Goethe himself on the death of Schiller are remarkable. He says:—"He lived

as a Man; and as a mature Man he departed from us. In that form in which one leaves the earth he still lives and moves for us in the world of spirits. Achilles is, for us, still present as an ever striving youth. That Schiller went away early is for us also a gain. From his tomb there comes to us an impulse strengthening us as with the breath of his own might and awakening a most earnest longing to fulfil lovingly and more and more the work that he began. So in all that he willed to do and in all that he fulfilled he shall live on for ever for his own nation and mankind." It need hardly be pointed out that Schiller's dramas are very successful on the stage and are among the most popular dramas even at the present day in Germany. Consequently he has succeeded in exerting for nearly a century an inspiring influence upon the minds of the young men of Germany. It would be endless were we to quote fine passages from the works of Schiller. But we content ourselves with quoting only one passage from his drama, *Don Carlos*, in which the Marquis of Posathus addresses the tyrant Philip II, as the passage can be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the present state of India. The passage is as follows —

"My home ! my fatherland ! there is none for me  
Spain all belongs to you and not to Spaniards,  
It is the gigantic body for one mind—  
Your own—throughout that body you alone,  
As omnipresent, think and work to make  
Yourself a mighty name: *you flourish here*  
*And none can grow besides you.* What you give  
Is but the food to gladiators given  
To make them strong to fight for you... ..  
Souls here can merely vegetate and die.  
Genius and Virtue grow to be cut down,  
As corn grows yellow for the reaper's scythe. "

### Count Cavour

The centenary of the birth of Count Cavour was celebrated with characteristic fervour in Italy last month. The anniversary was observed not only in Turin, the Piedmontese capital which witnessed the birth of Camille Cavour, but all over the whole kingdom of United Italy, to the founding of which he devoted his whole life. Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy, a descendant of Victor Emmanuel II the first king of *free* Italy who took his share in the struggle for the liberation of Italy along with Cavour, was present in Turin in person to honour the memory of the master-builder of the throne occupied by him at present. All the ministers of State, senators, deputies and several leading figures in the Italian public life of to-day were present at the commemorative meeting at Turin, at which the Premier read an address of appreciation on Count Cavour and his services to the country. In the historical hall of this gathering, where formerly the Italian Senate used to meet, was performed also the ceremony of uncovering a commemorative stone with an inscription to perpetuate the memory of one of the makers of modern Italy.

The centenary has been celebrated throughout Italy as a *national festival*, and rightly so; because, it was for the achievement of the Italian unity or nationhood and its emancipation that Cavour fought to the last. Cavour is one of the four patriots who are rightly reckoned as the makers of modern Italy, *viz.* Victor Emmanuel, Joseph Mazzini, Guiseppe Garibaldi, and Count Cavour. An aristocrat by birth and the inheritor of considerable wealth, Camille Cavour was singularly free from prejudices, and it was this element perhaps that was at the basis of the characteristic clearness of judgment in his public life.

In the days of boyhood Cavour was so full of the buoyancy and energy of nature that he showed little inclination for schooling. Being intended for the army, he entered the military academy at ten years of age, wherein he studied very hard, especially mathematics. He afterwards regretted that the literary side of his education had been neglected, perhaps mathematics satisfied his original bent of mind for definite statement and clear demonstrative argument. He had not much of the idealistic imagination in him, and the speculations that he indulged in were mostly social, political or industrial, those which are closely connected with positive and tangible interests. But his future career shows that he was capable of an absorbing enthusiasm which was all the more powerful because, disciplined by a sure judgment and wise patience. State service in Italy of the time with its numerous restraints had no charm for an independent spirit like that of Cavour, and very soon he had to return to private life from the military career. The miserable state of Italy weighed too heavily on his mind. At that time national life in Italy had been repressed, her commerce ruined, her intellectual growth stifled, and the very soul of her people debased and perverted by priest-craft and foreign despotism. The entrance of Frenchmen in Italy at the commencement of the last century, though it meant little else but the entrance of new masters, had at least the good effect of spreading the liberal ideas of French thinkers, and by accustoming the Italians to a well-ordered Government, it kindled more than ever the desire for national regeneration. The Peace of Vienna gave Austria direct or indirect rule over the whole of Italy, and the rising in 1820 in Naples and Piedmont furnished Austria with the pretext for armed intervention and an excuse for



rivetting faster the chains of subjection. Demoralisation and denationalization had so rapidly and fully set on, that later on the very sponsors of the rising in 1820 became the advocates of the Austrian despotism, and the prospects of Italian liberty seemed to be the darkest at the period. To appreciate rightly the greatness of Cavour and other patriots, we must compare the Italy they have made not with countries that have had for centuries a free development of their national life, but with the Italy of 1820 or 1830—the Italy oppressed by foreign despotism, demoralized, debased and disunited, while the noblest of her sons languished in Austrian prisons or wasted their lives away in exile. Count Cavour studied the miserable condition of his country for more than a dozen years in privacy. During these years his activity manifested itself in three directions: promotion of the material interests of his country, especially commerce and agriculture, study and observation of foreign countries and the principles of free Government, and synthetical manipulation of the result of his experiences. Towards the end of 1847, almost the whole of Italy was in a state of feverish excitement, and Cavour thought it was time to come out for action. His first public act was to institute at Turin a newspaper, *Risorgimento* which expressed his views. He also took his seat as one of the members of the Chamber of Deputies. From 1850 to 1852 Cavour was an active member of D'Azeglio's administration. After the latter's resignation, Count Cavour was requested to form a ministry by the King, and for the next nine years, he was, with short breaks, at the head of public affairs. In the Chamber, Cavour soon made his power felt. He was no orator in the ordinary sense of the word; his speeches had *power*, they read well, as hard hitting and logical expositions, though ill-delivered. Though he could not speak Italian

with ease and grace, he selected it for his speeches. Short and thick-set in appearance, and careless in dress, his prosaic face, when animated gave an impressive sense of that attribute which seemed to emanate from the whole man viz., power. With the strength of his convictions and clear judgment Cavour soon began to change the aspect of things. He improved the condition of Sardinian finances. He strenuously applied himself to strengthen the army. When in 1854, Cavour resolved that Piedmont should join France and England in the coming war with Russia, the propriety of his action was questioned. But the increased credit of Piedmont in Europe due to the successful military sally, already compensated for the heavy cost of the expedition. Piedmont, by qualifying for the part of an Italian advocate, in the Councils of Europe, gave a guarantee of good faith which was looked upon as a happy promise for the future. Having gained credit by participating in the Crimean War, Cavour made a way for discussing the grievances of Italy before the Congress at Paris in 1856. He laid the situation of his country before the Assembly, and although nothing else could be done, he addressed a memorandum to the French and English cabinets on the subject. The *morale* of the Piedmontese army had served to bring the name of Italian nationality before assembled Europe. Cavour's policy was to array the forces of European politics on the side of Italy by all the means within his power, and it is here that he rises to his best. Taking the advice and help of the French King, Cavour determined upon war, as the proper solution of the difficulty. But the peace of Villa-Franca disappointed him. Yet it broke the power of Austria in the Italian peninsula, and Italy was left free to mould her destiny. Cavour had so to manage the course of Italian diplomacy as to prevent a collision with France

or Austria, to gain time for the declaration of public opinion in other parts of Italy, and to bring all the provinces under the Government of Victor Emmanuel. Cavour brought about the unity of Italy by the sheer force and strategy of his diplomacy, and a few months later the first Italian Parliament met at Turin. He was the first Prime Minister of the Kingdom of United Italy, and the dream of his youth was fulfilled. He passed away in the full manhood of his life in 1861 after seeing the emancipation of Italy with his own eyes.

Of the patriots who brought about the liberation of Italy, Cavour is representative of a type, the politician or statesman. His inflexible resolution, penetrative sagacity, genius for constructive statemanship, his resourcefulness and diplomacy, all these were the symbols of his "intellectual organisation" as he called it. Whether he had to humour the wily temperament of his rulers, or to play upon the fears and ambitions of Napoleon III of France, whether he had to soften the chivalrous spirit of a Garibaldi, or realise into practice the idealism of a Mazzini,—his statesmanship never failed him. To him is due in a large measure the credit of welding into a whole the heterogenous and often discordant elements of Italian patriotism. One of the secrets of his success was the spirit of toleration which he possessed in a large degree; he was ever willing and generous to acknowledge with pride the shares taken by others in the making of Italy. He was free from jealousy of his co-workers, which characteristic was only the result of his deep and intense patriotism, simple and pure from the slightest personal consideration. In the eloquent panegyric which the present Premier of Italy, Signior Luzzatti bestowed on Cavour the other day at Turin, he said that the tokens of immortality which distinguished him were his manner of over-

coming difficulties seemingly insuperable, redeeming a people from servitude, and setting in on the high road to prosperity. A comparison is often made between Cavour and Bismarck. Prussia with eighteen million inhabitants was herself strong to undertake the task of her liberation. But little Piedmont had to employ diplomacy in order to secure French aid. The essential difference between the tasks of Cavour and Bismarck, as Signior Luzzatti very tersely put it, was seen in the fact that Italy was created by liberty, Germany by authority; Bismarck exercised a dictatorship on the authority of his King, Cavour by consent of the nation. "An Economist of supreme ability, minister of finance, rival of Peel, Gladstone and Thiers, without having at his disposal the inexhaustible resources of his foreign *confreres*, universal administrator, having directed nearly all the different Government departments, leaving behind him everywhere the trace of his sovereign genius, an orator after the English style, simple and persuasive, carrying conviction by his irresistible logic; a negotiator of treaties of all kinds which were models of political sagacity and added to all, a scientific agriculturist, a publicist, a journalist, and above all the founder of new Italy"—such was the tribute paid to Cavour by his successor Signior Luzzatti. Cavour, though he disapproved of the wild fervour of the revolutionary party, could utilize for his purpose the strength and energy of its spirit. He had more of the politician in him. Cavour's diplomacy and great sense of the practical is sometimes spoken of as a failing. But the charge could hardly stand when the principles of all great changes or revolutions are taken into consideration. Italy required the lofty idealism of Mazzini, as much as the chivalry of Garibaldi; the public spirit of Victor Emmanuel, as much as the statesmanship of Cavour. The

ideal must exist and manifest itself in the real and must be realised through the real. It is said that the sentiment is what makes historical miracles. One cannot do without the other, although there is an illusory antagonism between the two. In fact, Cavour seemed to be more cognisant of this truth than his critics, when he rendered willing homage to the services of his co-workers in the sacred work of the liberation of Italy, and her reinstatement on the way to progress. Cavour was no less an Italian patriot, because he lacked the divining qualities. The liberation and emancipation of Italy would not have been an accomplished fact without the man of ideals like Mazzini as much without the man of Cavour's positive mould, practical genius, force of patience and strength of will.

(11-9-1910)

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### Garibaldi

" Italy, what of the night ?

Ah, child, child it is long !

Moonbeam and starbeam and song

Leave it dumb now and dark;

Yet I perceive on the height,

Eastward, not now very far,

A song too loud for the lark,

A light too strong for a star. "

*Swinburne.*

As might have been expected, the centenary of the Italian patriot Garibaldi was celebrated with great enthusiasm throughout the length and breadth of Italy; and the Italian King gracefully gave a token of recognition to the celebration, by releasing all political prisoners. And it was the most appropriate act imaginable : for Garibaldi

himself was the most conspicuous political offender of the 19th century in Italy till his success made him a national hero. Notwithstanding the proverbial ingratitude of mankind, it was impossible that the Italian nation could have so soon forgotten their liberator, the great soldier-patriot who has not only adorned Italian history but whose name, as Victor Emmanuel truly observed, 'filled the furthest ends of the earth.' The chapter of Italian history from 1815, the year of the Congress of Vienna, to 1872, the year of Victor Emmanuel's entry into Rome, is a veritable romance in which many famous characters figured prominently. But Garibaldi is, by common consent, perhaps the most brilliant and romantic of them all. He typifies the man of undying faith, genuine patriotism, unrivalled self-sacrifice, impulsive and decisive action,—qualities which are essential to every man who happens to find himself born in a country hopelessly enslaved and who ardently wishes to see it emancipated. It has been remarked, that Garibaldi's true place is not in the aggregation of facts which we call history but in "the apotheosis of character which we call the Iliad, the Mahabharata, the Edda, the cycles of Arthur and Roland and the Spanish Romancers del Cid." But characters worthy to illumine myths occasionally incarnate themselves in mortal history, for the purpose probably of helping mankind to achieve salvation; and it is for this reason that we even in India may profitably study the life and character of Garibaldi, who by the very transcendental nature of his qualities may be claimed not only as a national but also as an international hero.

But in order that our readers may be able to fully appreciate the work and the spirit of Garibaldi, we must briefly review the condition of the nation which was liberated by him. It is a matter of common knowledge that

after the brilliant days of the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, Italy began fast to degenerate. The Rome of the days of Garibaldi was worse than a shadow or a mockery of the Rome of the time of Cæsar or Augustus. It had been so even long before Garibaldi; and the passionate lament of Rienzi was echoed by many Italian patriots before and after him. "Where are now these Romans, their virtue, their justice, their power? Why was I not born in those happy times?" And the tradition of the Roman longing for the restoration of the "Good Estate" was wonderfully preserved and handed down from father to son through many long and dark centuries. It is worthy of note that though scattered, disunited and perfectly demoralised for ages by foreign conquest and tyranny, the Italian race always hopefully cherished the idea of a reunited and regenerated Italy. Poets have everywhere been the harbingers of national aspiration; and Dante was the man in the dark Middle Ages who trimmed and led the beaconlight of this aspiration. The great Florentine poet vividly dreamt that Italy was invested with a Providential mission, that his people were the *chosen people of God who had lost their way but would find it out again*, that Rome would once more become the capital of a prosperous Italian nation. Then there was Petrarch who made the following half statement of fact and half prophecy.

"When virtue takes the field  
Short will the conflict be  
Barbarian rage shall yield  
The palm to Italy:

For patriot blood still warms Italian veins  
Though low the fire, a spark at least remains."

Machiavelli, though his principles have been unjustly slandered and though bad associations are mixed up with

his name, was at heart an ardent patriot; and the flowing sentiment of his heart has found vent in the concluding para of his famous book "The Prince" which is really an excellent treatise on practical statesmanship. Addressing Prince Lorenzo de Medici, whom he regards as the future liberator of Italy, and whom he fervently exhorts to speedily undertake that work of liberation, Machiavelli says:—"Such an opportunity ought eagerly to be embraced that Italy, after her long sufferings, may at last behold her deliverer appear. With what demonstrations of joy and gratitude, with what affection, with what impatience for revenge, would he not be received by those unfortunate provinces who have so long groaned under such odious oppression! Is there one Italian who would not hasten to pay him homage?" Coming nearer, we find another master mind, though not an Italian, foreshadowing the outlines of future events. Napoleon, when he was the French emperor, though he divided Italy among his relations could calmly think about this nation when his thoughts were receiving a speculative turn in his confinement at St. Helena; and his notes contain the following—"Italy, isolated between her natural limits, is destined to form a great and powerful nation. Italy is one nation; and Rome will, without the slightest doubt, be chosen by the Italians as their capital." Lord Byron, whose imagination was captivated by the charms of Southern Europe, in one of his finest outbursts of passion, thus exclaims, "It (Liberation of Italy) is a grand object, the very poetry of politics.—Only think—a free Italy!!! Why, there has been nothing like it since the days of Augustus." By a curious irony of fate Napoleon himself was instrumental in establishing the foot of France and Austria in the Italian soil. By 1815 the authority of Austria was completely established over Italy, which was subdivided into about ten States



with almost as many nationalities grown corrupt and degenerate with the worst features of the papal rule eating into the vitals of the nation. The resources and power of the ruling empire seemed almost inexhaustible, and the Princes of the Italian States were like puppets in the hands of the Austrian minister. But it is remarkable that with the spread of education political agitation began very soon and on a very large scale with a view to reverse the decree of Vienna and to secure complete independence for Italy. And in the thick of this political unrest dawned the manhood of Garibaldi.

Garibaldi was born on the 4th of July 1807 at a small village, called Nice. As gay as a lark and venturesome, his favourite sport was in water, and on one occasion he ran away, bound on a long voyage, but was caught in time by his father. As a boy he did not learn much, but his instincts were great and, even from his childhood he felt a kind of inexplicable fascination for Rome, the ancient capital of Italy, which was crystallised into 'Rome or death' as the maxim of his life. He was gentle-hearted and extremely kind; in boyhood he rescued many lives, in youth he nursed men dying of cholera, and in his old age he spent whole nights in hunting the wild country in search of lambs that had strayed away and were suffering from the cold air. He felt an instinctive repugnance for blood. And yet by an irony of fate, grim war was to be his veritable life. The reason was that his intense patriotism led him to seek paths which led to war and carnage. Though not learned he knew enough of history to set him yearning for the deliverance of his fallen country. His joy knew no bounds when he first heard his *Guru* St. Simonian Comille Barrault talk of Italy as "our country." From his friend, philosopher and guide, Mazzini, Garibaldi learnt that Italy was steeped in

misery owing to the tyranny of the Austrians, the corruption of the clerical classes, and the want of public spirit in the people. Even before Mazzini, the society of the Carbonari, a kind of secret society, formed on the model of Freemasonry, had begun the work of organising active protests and revolts against the tyranny of the authorities. Their cry was "God, King and the Constitution." The first revolt in Naples in 1821 failed and about eight hundred persons paid the penalty by their lives. In that Piedmont was more successful; but Prince Meternich followed a policy of stern repression and cruelty, and for a number of years while risings after risings were taking place in different parts of Italy the prison and the scaffold were kept busy. The Italian nationalists, however, got new hope with the advent of Charles Albert to whom Mazzini in 1831, when only 26 years of age, addressed a letter of historical importance. Therein he exhorted the King to take the lead and deliver Italy from the foreign yoke. Mazzini was originally a Carbonaro, but later on he founded a new society called 'Young Italy.' It was free from the mysticism of the Carbonari, and its aim was as much to free Italy from foreign rule, as to regenerate her religion and her morals. The one great service which Mazzini rendered was to successfully preach the Unity of Italy before which all the other ideas, of a Federal Republic, of Leagues of Princes, of provincial autonomy, and of insular home-rule, sunk into insignificance. The society of Young Italy was a favourite with the sailors, and it was by a sailor that Garibaldi was made a member of 'Young Italy.' After lighting his torch at the great luminary of patriotism, we mean Mazzini, and under his instruction, Garibaldi, being the captain of a sailing vessel, enrolled himself as a common sailor in the Piedmontese Navy with the purpose of securing converts to the society of 'Young



Italy. A premature revolutionary project having come to light, Mazzini had to seek banishment in England, and Garibaldi sailed for America to avoid the consequences of his share in the abortive attempt. He was sentenced to death and exposed to public vengeance as an outlaw—'an enemy of the State liable to all penalties of a brigand of the first category.' And it is said that the first view Garibaldi ever had of his own name in print was in the death sentence published in the Government Gazette. The next twelve years Garibaldi spent mostly in adventures, fighting battles for the cause of liberty in a foreign land and for the benefit of foreigners, and undergoing torture and suffering, which when described must prove extremely thrilling to even the most cynical or phlegmatic soul. It was during his wild and romantic career in America that he was providentially mated to a woman who was as spirited, brave and romance-loving as himself—the world-famous Anita. During all this time Garibaldi, though absent in body, was present in spirit, among his countrymen who, hearing of his wonderful exploits, had cherished a dear memory for him and were looking forward to his return to assist in the cause of their liberation. At the age of forty-one Garibaldi returned to Italy with the death-sentence yet unrevoked. By this time a reaction against the rule of the Austrians had definitely set in in the minds of the Italians in every part of the country. Without caring what his fate would be he went straight to King Charles Albert, offered him his sword and the services of his legion of eighty-five volunteers. The pilgrim soldier was received by Charles Albert with a hearty shake of the hand, but was referred to his ministers who were always jealous of Garibaldi and his volunteers. The war with Austria was of a short duration and Garibaldi, who had not the pleasure of striking a single blow refused to recog-

nise the peace and to lay down arms and declared the King to be a traitor and himself at war with any one who recognised peace in Italy before the country was free from the Austrians. The King offered him a high rank in the Sardinian army, but Garibaldi refused it and threw in his lot, though for a time, with the revolutionaries of Mazzini who not only wanted the Austrians to go, but Italy to be under a Republic and not a Monarchy. Then came the revolution in Rome, the flight of the Pope, the formation of a short-lived but glorious Republic with Mazzini as its adviser and Garibaldi as its General, a splendid defence of Rome against heavy odds, the treachery of Louis Napoleon, the invasion by the French troops the fall of Rome, and the flight of Garibaldi, once more for life. The tale of his sufferings at this time was such as could not be surpassed by any legendary lay. "No written or unwritten poem was richer in the elements of romance, courage and fortitude" than the story of Garibaldi's escape across the Appenines. Hunted like a bandit among the woods, and hiding behind rock boulders among the mountains, he wandered from place to place, and, the climax of his misfortunes came when Anita, on the threshold of delivery and unable to bear the fatigues, died and left him desolate with three orphans to take care of. Eventually Garibaldi made his way to America, where in New York he began to make tallow candles in a back street to earn his livelihood. Curiously enough the year 1848 was a year of unsuccessful revolutions everywhere in Europe, and New York had become a general asylum for disappointed revolutionists. Here while Garibaldi was making candles, Ledru Rollin was a shore porter, Louis Blank a dancing master, Felix Pyat a scene-shifter, Lamartine a mendicant, a German patriot was working as a barber, and a French patriot was selling cabbages in the streets.

Garibaldi lived for 18 months at New York, then went, to South America, the old scene of his adventures, earned some money as a coasting trader, returned to Italy, bought the island of Caprera and settled there apparently for life, though the flame of revolutionary activity was burning full gloriously in his heart.

Nor was Italy in a condition to give him rest. The patriotic feeling against Austria was also burning in the heart of every Italian from the King downwards, and a statesman like Count Cavour was at this time at the head of affairs. The Piedmontese at this time used to say "We have Chambers of representatives, and we have a constitution and the name of all this is Cavour."

On the outbreak of war against Austria again in 1859 Garibaldi was summoned to take command of the Alpine infantry, and he had now the satisfaction of using his sword successfully against the enemy of his nation. After a series of victorious fights he liberated the Alpine territory up to Tirol; but by a curious and peculiarly bitter irony of fate the war came to a termination by the treaty of Villafranca by which Nice, Garibaldi's own birth-place, was ceded to Austria in return for some of the finest Italian territory ceded by her. Cavour was responsible for this and though it was all done under the pressure of exigencies, still Garibaldi could never forgive Cavour for this to the end of his life. Garibaldi returned to Caprera but his mind had no rest: and here he planned the invasion of Sicily which was to end so gloriously by Victor Emmanuel being proclaimed the King there. It was a proud moment for Garibaldi when after voluntarily laying down his dictatorship, he put the Neapolitan crown on the head of his King to whom he was never disloyal, notwithstanding his revolutionary principles. His conduct at this time was admirably self-sacrificing: for when it was in his power

to take revenge upon every one, when by lifting a finger he could have raised a revolution in the land, he quietly quitted the scenes of his triumph, poorer than when perhaps he came, having to borrow £ 20 to pay his debts. He had only fifteen shillings in his pocket when he returned to Caprera. But as usual the life at Caprera, the tilling of barren rocks and listening to the echo of the waves could not please his mind. So in 1862 he set out on an invasion of Rome planned as usual on his own responsibility. But this time Cavour, the statesman, who perhaps did not think that the time was ripe for such an invasion, sent the State troops to oppose him. Garibaldi was wounded in the fight at Aspromonte and captured. But being of course liberated by an amnesty, he once more returned to his island home. In 1864 he visited London where he was regularly lionised. Splendid public receptions were given to him, the freedom of the City of London was conferred on him and it was stated in the public address of London read to him by the City Chamberlain that though history usually reproduces herself at intervals more or less frequently, still they turned her pages in vain to meet with the prototype of *Giuseppe Garibaldi*. "We find," the address recorded, "no counterpart to your career even among the fabled legends of the early period of that city, Rome, with which your name is imperishably associated. The glories of an accomplished general, associated with the instinct and daring of the old sea-kings, valour which liberated kingdoms and placed them at your feet, combined with the stern incorruptibility of a *Dentatus*, and the severe simplicity of a *Cincinnatus*, a heart in which the Goldness of a *Leonidas* dwells compatibly with the tenderness of a woman and the truthfulness of a child—and the whole strangely tempered and elevated by an earnest craving for the reign of peace, brotherhood and freedom, mani-

festing faith in the world's future, in humanity and in 'God.' We have made this quotation from the address of the London Corporation because we have never come across a better appreciation of the best points in Garibaldi's character or expressed in better words. All England was mad with the joy of welcoming and praising Garibaldi, so much so that the Government had to put an artificial termination to it in order to save the risk of a war with France, who was scandalised by the honour shown to her enemy. As Victor Hugo has put it, "it is really beautiful and grand to be the guest of London after being the liberator of Italy."

In 1866, Italy once more went to war with Austria, and again Garibaldi was given the command of the volunteer army. But once more a not very creditable peace had to be made, and Garibaldi was compelled to sheathe his sword against his wishes. The restless spirit of Caprera once more organised a volunteer army for the invasion of Rome and making his escape from his island home which was specially guarded by the State cruisers to prevent his exit, was on the point of entering the papal territory, when he was arrested and deported to his home. Weary of his repeated failures to march on Rome, he varied the occupation by writing several romances till the monarchy was overthrown in and Garibaldi was requested by the leading republican spirits to go and fight the battles of France against Germany. It may perhaps be noted that though the French were unsuccessful throughout, Garibaldi alone was never defeated. He was elected a Deputy to the French Chamber, and on a violent discussion taking place as to the validity of his election as being a foreigner, the fiery spirit of Victor Hugo is said to have censured the opponents with these words:—"Not a King, not a State, no one came forward to help France, who had done so much for Europe—but only one man. No powers interposed,

but a man came forward, that man was a power. He came, and he has fought. I do not wish to injure any one, I speak but the plain truth, he was the only general who fought for France who was not conquered." This was the last fighting that Garibaldi made. The ideal of his imagination was subsequently realised and Rome did become the capital of Italy; but this was done without Garibaldi having to unsheathe his sword. The rest of his days were spent in peace in his island home, where he quietly tended the sheep and grew potatoes. His subsequent work in Rome as a Commissioner of Works and as Inspector of the Tiber Inundation dams offers a nice contrast with the convulsive fever which agitated his mind over the name of Rome. Garibaldi died at Caprera on the 2nd of June 1882, closely surrounded by an affectionate family and at a distance by a whole world of grateful admirers.

It were but prosaic to moralise upon the teaching of this great heroic character. We have already said that he is more an international than a national hero; for, if his patriotism primarily related to his own country as was but natural, it is evident that love for the freedom of humanity in any part of the world was the noble passion that ruled him. It is possible to come across more prudent or flawless lives, but it is perhaps impossible to find a soul so actively patriotic and so thoroughly self-sacrificing in all the best senses of the word as Garibaldi. It was given to him to commence his career at a time when the prospect for his country was the darkest possible: and yet it was also given to him to buoy up his life on an undying faith in his own destiny as well as the destiny of his country. He has shown to the world what a single individual can accomplish for his country, provided he is ready not to dream but to act and to give the best that is given to him, namely, his life.

(7-7-1907)



## Herbert Spencer

A great and noble spirit is gone! The greatest philosopher of the 19th century is dead! Herbert Spencer passed off last week at the ripe old age of 83. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the great void that has been caused in the domain of philosophy by his death. Of course the gigantic work, that he had chalked out for himself nearly half a century ago, he lived to complete in all its details. He had already begun to revise the several volumes of his *Magnum Opus*, the Synthetic philosophy, and the "First Principles" and the "Principles of Biology" had already received the revising touch of the masterhand. But, presumably, after he had accomplished this much he found his physical powers failing, and he had to give up the idea of revising the rest. He, therefore, spent the last few years of his ebbing life in collecting together fragments of his work and publishing them under the modest title of "Facts and Comments" which appeared sometime ago. In the short preface to that volume he touchingly assures his readers that that would certainly be his last work, and unfortunately his word has proved too true. There is one work still, and from one point of view perhaps the greatest—it will certainly prove one of the noblest—which still remains to be published, and its appearance will be awaited with no small curiosity by the reading public all over the world. We, of course, mean his autobiography, which, he has himself told us, is both written and printed, but which, according to his wishes, was not to be published until after his death. We expect to find in that work, besides the important details of a long life,—which for many many years was almost an uninterrupted struggle with failing health, and for no few years a struggle against lack of appreciation and of ade-

quate patronage—a key to the formation of a gigantic intellect and a truly noble character. Now that he is gone, the work, it is to be hoped, will soon be published, and thus the public curiosity satisfied and the public expectations fulfilled.

Within the short space of a newspaper article it is impossible to give an adequate idea of the revolution that Spencer's works effected in the notions of the humanity at large as to the way in which this universe has developed in the past and will progress in the future. Though he was not strictly speaking the originator of the general idea of evolution, it was emphatically he who gave it a systematic form, and who embodied in a famous formula the law of evolution, as it is applicable to all things alike from the biggest star in the heavens to the smallest thing on the face of the earth. It was this law which he has elaborated in the second half of his "First Principles," the first having been devoted to the establishment of the supreme truth that the prime cause of all things is not only unknown but is absolutely unknowable. In the remaining volumes of his Synthetic Philosophy this grand law of evolution was applied to the eternal truths of biology, sociology and ethics, and thus the all-pervading nature of the law placed beyond all doubt. In this way where there was chaos he produced order, and where there was ignorance or vague surmise, he produced complete and undoubted knowledge. Such is the grand legacy he has left to the mankind at large, and for that inexhaustible and invaluable gift, it will always remain indebted to him.

Though his philosophy of the Knowable is thus a unique achievement of its kind and an unfailing source of knowledge and inspiration to all generations of mankind, his philosophy of the Unknowable is the grandest of all speculations that emanated from his brain. Every thinking

mind, as soon as it has emerged from the preliminary stages of growth and development, necessarily asks itself the question as to the ultimate cause of all things that one sees in this world including oneself. Herbert Spencer has given a nearly final answer to that question, and though it cannot be a consoling one to all minds, being a mere negation, it is the only possible one under the present circumstances. He has deduced from the laws of thinking the proposition that all our knowledge is relative and can never be absolute. We always think in relations, and though, therefore, the laws of thinking necessitate the supposition of the existence of a supreme cause, those very laws also tell us that we know nothing and can know nothing of the nature of that cause. To many minds this is quite disappointing, not to say unconsoling. But if we rightly consider our position in this universe that we, including our minds, are a part and parcel of the manifestations of the supreme cause, we can easily understand how our very constitution prevents all possibility of our ever learning anything of the essential nature of that of which the whole universe is a grand manifestation. That attempt, therefore, must always prove futile and that aspiration must always remain unfulfilled; and to vex our souls over it is as reasonable as over the fact that one cannot overleap oneself. We can no more get behind the phenomenal than we can get rid of our shadows.

We have thus alluded in the briefest possible manner to the unique work which the departed philosopher has effected in the domain of philosophy. Now, if we look to his life with its struggles, that too is an equally grand sight. The conditions of his work as well as of his health necessitated his leading a secluded life almost throughout his long career, but enough has come out to show that his was really a strong and lovable

nature, and that he illustrated in his own life the teachings of his noble philosophy. Practically self-educated, he led to the last a self-existent life. He never married, and he never sought, nor ever consented to receive any academic or any other kind of honours. In his evidence before the International Copy-Right Commission he has pathetically told us how for a number of years his works had the slowest and the smallest possible sale, and how besides the difficulties of a weak health he had to contend with those of the grosser kind also; still he would not accept any extraneous help extended to him by some of his American friends and admirers. And it is well-known that some years ago when he was pressed by a host of influential men to sit for a semi-public portrait of his it was with the greatest difficulty that he could be persuaded to do so. It is also well-known that when one of the interpreters of his teachings on this side of the world requested him for permission to translate his works he gave it in the most generous way possible, saying he welcomed all efforts that tended to make his works accessible to the peoples of different continents. The prefaces to several of his later works furnish very pathetic and eloquent glimpses as to how much he placed the world before self, and how he worked even in the midst of complete nervous prostration, and even changed the natural and pre-chalked-out order of the preparation and publication of his works in order that the world might not be deprived of what he conceived to be his noblest teaching, and rightly too, viz. that on morality. Altogether he lived as nobly as he preached, and his whole life was a grand realisation of the ideal man of the future that he so vividly depicted in his works.

One of our contemporaries speaking about his unique influence over the minds of older generations of educated

Indians *avere* that the younger generations in this country do not respond so fully to his teachings, and that his influence has already waned. If this be a fact, it is certainly to be regretted, and the Universities which have fought so shy of his works are not a little to blame in the matter. Apart from the value of his teachings, the very study of his works is an education in itself, his mode of treatment so severely logical and his diction so clear. He never resorted to the ornate or the bombastic for effect, and throughout his voluminous works it is difficult to point out one superfluous word or phrase. In short, he is a philosopher for all times, for all climes, and for all conditions of men, and if his own countrymen, who are nothing if not essentially conservative, did not respond to his freedom-breathing teachings as fully as their cousins across the Atlantic, or the older generations of educated India, their example need not be copied by those who love truth for itself regardless of extraneous circumstances, to whatever country or whatever generation they may belong. (13-12-03)

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### Lord Ripon

The universal feeling of regret with which the death of Lord Ripon, even at the ripe age of eighty-two, is regarded throughout the length and breadth of India, is not indeed to be interpreted as a protest against human mortality. It is only the natural out-burst of the grateful mind of a nation whose sense of obligations to him was quickened by the news that he had parted this life and that India could no longer benefit by his benevolence and beneficence. There have been Viceroys and Viceroys of India; and it would be but affectation to make the senti-

ments of a Dependency the only measure of the real worth of its rulers as men. But a Dependency may surely be pardoned if it chose to refuse to recognise the claims to gratitude of any man placed in the position of a ruler except as a ruler. And looked at from this point of view, no Viceroy has, during the last hundred and twenty-five years, come up to the standard of national popularity as Lord Ripon. It is nothing to us in India that in his own country Lord Ripon was regarded as mere mediocrity, as a weak and unsuccessful statesman at best. To us he was the embodiment of the real beneficence and of the best traditions of British statesmanship; and this our estimate of his worth will now remain as long as his cherished memory. And this notwithstanding the fact that, while it was given to him only to inaugurate the modest beginnings of Self-Government in India, it has since fallen to the lot of at least two of his successors to usher in changes in the constitution of the government of the country which, howsoever they may have failed to answer the enthusiastic expectations of the people for the moment, are indisputably great land-marks in themselves in the path of their political advancement. This is evidently due to the tendency of the human mind to attach greater importance to the results of a qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis. Thus the Viceroyalty of Lord Lansdowne was signalised by the introduction of expanded and elective Legislative Councils; but the Tory bent of his Lordship's mind was painfully felt by the Indian people in other matters; and he was understood to be rather an agent than an author in the scheme of reform of his time. Lord Minto's regime has been characterised by still more striking and fruitful reforms. And speaking with an unbiassed mind, we have to admit that Lord Minto, at the time of his departure, is sure to leave us leagues ahead of the jour-

ney we had accomplished when we nearly smothered Lord Ripon at Bombay with flowers, and blessings still more fragrant and sweet-breathing than flowers, in December 1884. Lord Minto's mind is made of a decidedly finer grain than Lord Lansdowne's. But it has been his misfortune to have to let loose the fierce hounds of repression even while earnestly pleading and stoutly maintaining the need of conceding a larger share to the people in the *government of their own country*. Lord Ripon was as lucky as he was benevolent; and three things stand out, in our opinion, as the reasons of his unexcelled popularity. In the first place, his mind was liberal in the best sense of the word, and it was, the nation was sure, saturated, with good-will to the people of India. Secondly, the reforms he introduced were ungrudgingly and spontaneously given; and they marked the foundation of the political education of the country. And thirdly, and which is as important as any of the other two things, he had manifestly to suffer for what he considered to be his duty towards the Indian people. He had to bear his cross, and the sight of the cross of his pitiful martyrdom, perhaps more than anything else, endeared him so to an alien and befriended people. If Lord Ripon was the most popular Viceroy of India, he was, beyond question, a Viceroy who was the most hated and persecuted by his own people. They abused him in the press; they boycotted him in society; they burned his effigies in public places; and the shameful story is admitted of a plot to kidnap and send him to England in a secret manner via the Cape of Good-Hope. The measure of the hatred of his own kith and kin may well serve as the measure of his worth to India, if we once recognise that such indeed is the conflict of interest between the White men and the Indian people that you cannot hope to do an iota of good to the latter without

your being regarded as having done a lot of evil to the former. All this makes it quite easy to understand why so phenomenal should have been the honour done to him when he left India, why, when three or four Viceroys had had extensions of the term of their Viceroyalty when the people did not want it, Lord Ripon was the only Viceroy for the extension of whose term of Viceroyalty petitions were adopted at mass meetings in the country which he governed.

Now what were the principal achievements of Lord Ripon as a Viceroy ? The sound policy of non-intervention by force on the frontiers of India; the establishment of friendly relations with the Afgan tribes, cemented by a generous act of self-abnegation; the rateable distribution of the cost of military operations, undertaken beyond the frontiers, between India and England; the effort made to start private railways and other enterprises with or without State help; the encouragement afforded to Native enterprise by ordering all stores to be bought in India, and the dissemination of information on all subjects of foreign commerce and domestic consumption; the elevation of Native members of the Judicial Service to the highest Judicial posts; the renewed establishment of State scholarships in particular departments; the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act; the milder administration of the Arms Act; the reduction of the Salt duties; the appointment of the Education Commission; the encouragement given to Primary and Higher Education; introduction of Local Self-Government; extension of the principle of financial decentralisation; the relaxation of the stringency of the Revenue system; a bold attempt to remove racial distinctions and disabilities in respect of public offices. All these unmistakably point to a spontaneously liberal trend of the mind; and the reforms, whether accomplished or



foreshadowed, were all the more welcome, because they were not yielded grudgingly either as a sop to rally the friends of Government around their standard, or as a concession to agitation. But even more appealing to the imagination proved his Lordship's attitude towards the Ilbert Bill, which, whatever the intrinsic merits of its provisions, proved the touch-stone to test the real sentiments of the rulers towards the ruled in this country. When we speak of the rulers we mean the Anglo-Indians, because they are the dominant factor in the Indian situation and it is they who tried to shake earth and heaven as if their whole existence in India was at stake owing to the Ilbert Bill. The sentiments of the Anglo-Indian community at this time we find thus described by the late Mr. Ranade:—

“The leaders of the Anglo-Indian community have shrunk from no assertion in their work of self-exaltation and the disparagement of the people of India. They have asserted that India does not belong to the Native races and that its foreign masters alone can put forth any just claim to the status of an Indian people. The alleged equality before the law and the sacredness of national pledges have been denounced as figments of soft brained sentimentality. The distinctive superiority of race and caste has been laid down as an axiomatic and incontrovertible fact which cannot be safely ignored. The gospel of Force and not the gospel of Christ has been preached as representing the wisdom of the law by the prophets of this new political creed. The proud lordliness of caste has been hugged as a priceless inheritance and inalienable birth-right which can, under no circumstances, be shared in common with the so-called elder branch of the Aryan brotherhood. The sin of colour has been branded as an incurable leprosy. The teeming multitudes of this country,

have been denounced as unfit to be treated on any higher footing than that of children and slaves, always kept under strict discipline. Their picked talent has been declared unfit to try the veriest loafer of white skin. The national character for veracity has been impeached and the purity of the women of India has been questioned with a rude impertinence amidst applauding cheers from a mixed audience of ladies and gentlemen in the metropolis of India. The submissive loyalty of the Indian people has been denounced as unnatural and a degrading badge of the lower type of their humanity. And British power has been made to ostentatiously rest solely on the argument of the unsheathed sword and not on the sword scabbarded in affection and loyalty. "

That was the situation when Lord Ripon adhered to the principles of the Ilbert Bill, and was for that reason branded as a bird fouling his own nest. The Ilbert Bill, however, was not the real cause of offence given to the Anglo-Indian community, for as Lord Ripon himself recently declared in an interview to Mr. Stead of the *Review of Reviews*, the extension of Local Self-Government was resented by the whole Anglo-Indian brotherhood as much as the Ilbert Bill, or even more. But Lord Ripon's own faith in the mission of England in India was not to be shaken by anything. Replying to the various addresses given to him at Bombay at the time of his departure his Lordship said "The greatest of Roman poets told his countrymen in terms of glowing eloquence that it was their duty to create the habits of peace to succour their subjects and to overthrow the proud. But according to my judgment, although that end was a noble and high one, the aim of England ought to be nobler and higher still. If she is to fulfil the mighty task which God has laid upon her and to interpret rightly the wondrous story

of the Indian empire, she must lend her untiring energies and her iron will to raise in the scale of nations the people entrusted to her care and to impart to them gradually more and more the *richest gifts* which she herself enjoys and to rule them not for her own aggrandisement nor yet for the mere profit of her own people, but with a constant and unwearied endeavouring to promote their highest good." That is why Indians liked Lord Ripon, and that is why they will forever cherish his memory. (18-7-1929)

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### A. O. Hume

Mr. Allan Octavian Hume, the father of the Indian National Congress movement, is dead; and the news will be received with pain and grief from one end of the country to the other. For some time past news was coming that this Congress-octogenerian was in a precarious condition of health, and at last he has succumbed to the illness. Mr. Hume was one of the distinguished trio of Congress veterans—Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir William Wedderburn and Mr. A. O. Hume. In recent years Mr. Hume was living for the most part in retirement like his colleague Mr. Dadabhai, unless called upon to raise his voice by the exigencies of the situation. Mr. Hume was born in 1829 of a Radical stock. He passed the test examination from the East India Company's college at Hailebury and at the age of twenty joined the Indian service in the N. W. Provinces. Unlike the Civilian of the present day, he was not at once entrusted with magisterial work. He had to start his career as a Mohurrir (clerk) of the Police Station. After three months he was made a Niab Darogha and soon afterwards became a Thanadar. It was only after

he had undergone this introductory service and practical routine that Mr. Hume was appointed Magistrate and Deputy Collector at Etawah. Soon afterwards the Sepoy Mutiny broke out. The young officer had to escape, disguised as an Indian, with the help of his chapprassi and townsman; and at the time he also sent his people to Agra under three Indian gentlemen. In December 1857 he raised, under Lord Canning's orders, a small local band of infantry and cavalry, at Etawah. After the storm of the Mutiny had subsided, Mr. Hume worked peacefully at Etawah till 1867, when he was made Commissioner of Customs. In 1870 he was officiating Secretary in the Home Department to the Government of India; later on was made Revenue Secretary. And three years before his retirement in 1882 he was appointed member of the Board of Revenue for the N. W. Provinces. Mr. Hume had very strong sympathies for the land and its people, and wished to stay in India even after retirement, and for this purpose bought a house at Simla. His Indian experiences during the Mutiny, he said, had shown him the noble side of Indian character, and he so identified himself with Indian aspirations that he preferred being called a "native." The conditions of administration which obtained in India during those days of incomplete consolidation and loose organisation, must have also helped Mr. Hume, to a great extent, to know and be more of the people than the isolated bureaucrat of the present times.

Mr. Hume's memory will be cherished in India not so much for his official career, as for the work that he did after retirement in rearing a national Indian institution—the Congress. Mr. Hume may not be credited with being the originator of the Congress. But no one else could be said to have done so much as he did to foster that nursling in those days. At first officialism proffered a bland smile

at the new "baby" of the Congress, expecting that it would turn out to be its tool. Lord Dufferin welcomed the organisation and for the first two years was on friendly terms with Mr. Hume. But the Congress soon grew ambitious in its aims and critical in its tone, far beyond the expectations of his Lordship, and in 1887 Lord Dufferin openly broke with the Congress in one of his speeches at Calcutta. Since then the Congress has been tabooed by the Government; the climax was reached during Lord Curzon's career when his Lordship in 1904 refused to receive Sir Henry Cotton, as president of the Congress. Now the old spirit of friendliness promises to come over again: and last year Lord Hardinge received the Congress deputation in full form. Mr. Hume had a tough controversy with Sir Sayed Ahmed who preached the gospel of separation from the Congress to the Mahomedans, and weaned them to the official banner. He had to cross swords also with Sir Auckland Colvin as to the justification of the Congress movement; and his pamphlet of 1888, containing Sir Auckland's attack and Mr. Hume's strong reply, is read as a very sound justification of Indian national aspirations even to-day. In his reply Mr. Hume wrote that "so far from representative institutions being alien to the genius of the nation, they had, as far as we can see, their origin in India, they underlie the whole social structure of indigenous society, and are universally understood." Mr. Hume preached a gospel as much of self-help as of co-operation. For he said that it was almost futile to expect that you may get the thing wanted from either political party in power. The political parties in England were, he said, adepts in dishing each other, for power and place. The great bulk of the leading politicians on both sides, the men who most compose the ministries, however virtuous, honest, and upright they may be in private life,

he said, "are in public life the veriest humbugs—talking like angels but ever ready to do the devil's work"—to sacrifice principle and justice. The swing of the political pendulum in England was of no great moment to India, he thought, unless it was backed up by persistent agitation in India. In his message of 1903 to the Congress Mr. Hume repeated his old warning that "nations by themselves are made." He appealed:—"Can you suppose that a race is to be won by merely looking at the course and talking brilliantly about it? Can you fancy that any despotic government... .. will willingly yield to you those political privileges, which you are ten thousand times right in demanding, but which will greatly impede, nay, wholly prevent their continuing to govern the country in '*sic volo sic jubeo*' method in which alone they have faith; privileges that will automatically limit and diminish their powers and authority and equally materially diminish the number of their own race for whom they can find offices? Do you dream that the British nation here, be the Tories or the Liberals at the helm, will go out of their way to insist on justice being done to you simply because it is justice?" In Mr. Hume's opinion there is only one possible and righteous way to secure our rights, and that is continuous constitutional political agitation in union. He urged:—"Be in earnest; disregard all threats—spurn all coercion—prove to the British nation that you are really determined to be fairly dealt with in this matter; that you are resolved never to give them a day's peace till you are so dealt with; that you will spend your time, your money, your lives, if need be, in bringing this about, and in so doing, do all, so as to prove that you really deserve what you demand, and, believe me, the tremendous barriers that seem now to bar your progress on all sides, will melt noiselessly away, like walls of snow before the summer's

sun." Is not this message as pregnant with meaning to-day as it was nearly ten years ago ? (4-8-1912)

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### W. T. Stead

Mr. W. T. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews*, is dead and lost to the world in the tragic disaster which befell the *Titanic* in her maiden voyage, and the news must have sent a thrill of pain in the whole journalistic world. For no other periodical was there of such a world-reputation and world-connection. Month after month the *Review of Reviews* was eagerly and anxiously waited for by expectant readers in almost all the parts of the world. The *Review* left no important topic, wherever it happened, untouched and stood up always for the right rather than might. By its plain, blunt, cranky, straightforward manner and by the high ideals it upheld, it had become a potent force. It was, besides, the most influential periodical in the world, because of the singular personality of its editor, Mr. Stead. Mr. Stead was a veritable "lion" of the Press. It falls to the hands of a few Knights of the Pen to sit in audiences with Czars and Sultans, to interview Emperors and Ministers, and to hob-nobble with Premiers and Secretaries of State. With all these high connections and meshes of influence, Mr. Stead stood up to the last hour of his death, the unflinching champion of the ideals he held, the "prophetic" journalist that he came to be from his early years.

The puritanic bent of mind which he inherited from his father, Mr. Stead kept up throughout his career. Born in 1859 of a Congregational Minister, Mr. Stead imbibed the religious spirit—the spirit of purity, honesty, and benevo-

lence—which characterised his writings. Though an office boy in the early years, he had an itch for writing and used to scribble letters to the press. Thus he became known to the Knights of the Pen, and subsequently came to be the editor of the *Northern Echo* in his twenty-third year. His writings in his paper on Eastern questions, the rights of women and social purity attracted the attention of statesmen like Mr. Gladstone who admired the justice, heartiness and ability of the writings. In 1850 Mr. Stead joined Mr. John Morley, then Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, as his assistant. It was just before he joined this new post, that Mr. Stead thus explained what prophetic journalism meant :—"any man who is to guide the opinion of other men, ought ever to have before his eyes the fact that right is right and wrong is wrong." In 1883 he became the editor of the *Gazette* and worked in that capacity till 1889. During this period Mr. Stead originated the practice of interviewing men of note and publishing their views on the questions of the day. In this art he soon became an adept and had few equals who could so effectively use the art. Mr. Stead wrote in 1884 his articles on the coaling questions of the British Navy and through them influenced the policy of the Admiralty. His publication "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" brought him into the clutches of the law and, as a consequence, Mr. Stead had to undergo imprisonment. Political offences having been reckoned in England as standing on a different footing from ordinary felonies, Mr. Stead was treated in prison in an easy manner, most unlike the Indian Politicals who are classed along with murderous convicts and robbers. He used to edit the *Pall Mall Gazette* from prison. In 1890 Mr. Stead started the *Review of Reviews*, and this new venture grew so soon into popularity that in its very second year was issued an American edition and four years



later an Australian edition. Mr. Stead by this time had already published his "Truth about Russia" which was taken to be the outcome of his Russo-philism. During the Boer War Mr. Stead issued the pamphlet "Shall I slay my brother Boer?" which along with other writings on the subject exposed the nefarious policy underlying the wanton crusades undertaken in South Africa, and roused no small animosity against him in English political circles. His other work, "If Christ came to Chicago" came upon the public quite like a revelation, exposing the ungodly ways into which the "civilised" life of the dollar-worshipper of America had fallen. Mr. Stead believed in spiritualism and conducted for some time a journal—the *Borderland*—devoted to occult and spiritual research. Latterly he had developed his spiritual powers to such an extent that by means of a medium (Julia was the name) he used to report interviews of dead men like Mr. Gladstone on questions of the day. He highly appreciated the labours of the late Babu Shishir Kumar Ghose, of the *Hindu Spiritual Magazine*, in the field of psychic and spiritual research. Mr. Stead wrote several other pamphlets, but in all of them he upheld the "prophetic" creed which he had conceived. Mr. Stead's labours in the cause of peace have resulted in the establishment of the Hague Tribunal. He sided with the labour movement against the tyranny of capitalism. In the recent momentous question of the reform of the Lords he sided with the Liberal Government; he also upheld the social measures of Mr. Lloyd George which sought to improve the condition of the masses. Mr. Stead was an Imperialist—of that there can be no doubt—but of quite a different line from those who see in that term nothing but the maxim gun and the dreadnought. His idea of an Empire favoured a federation of practically free nationalities. With a view

to push this view further, he organised, three years ago, the Imperial Press Conference, which may be credited to be the fore-runner of the Imperial Colonial Conference of last year. With regard to the Irish question, Mr. Stead was a Home Ruler and stood consistently against the coercive policy by which the various governments tried to crush that momentous question. When Mr. Gladstone moved the Home Rule Bill, Mr. Stead wrote that it was ungrateful on Mr. Gladstone's part not to recognise the splendid part played by Mr. Parnell and his colleagues in pushing to the fore-front the Irish question which pressed like a galling thorn in the sides of the Empire. And none could have felt happier than Mr. Stead that the demands of Ireland crying aloud for the last several hundreds of years are now on the threshold of consummation.

If Ireland could feel bitter pangs at the loss of one of its staunch supporters in Mr. Stead, no less severe will be the loss to India. For Mr. Stead has been known to consistently uphold the application of liberal principles to Indian affairs. He always pleaded for a fair recognition of young India's aspirations and demands, and was ceaselessly fighting, as far as he could, against the benevolent despotism so strenuously upheld by the bureaucracy in India. Never did Mr. Stead stand up more boldly for the claims of India than during the last few years when the continual contempt shown by the Government to Indian aspirations resulted in the creation of serious unrest in the land. To put down this unrest the Government adopted a policy of repression, and Mr. Stead raised his powerful voice against it. He was grieved that it should have fallen to the lot of Lord Morley, his old master, to be the instrument of this policy. Mr. Stead defended Lord Morley, the reform of the Councils, the Indian appointments to the Executive Councils and the

India Office, as strongly as he censured him for the acts of repression undertaken during his regime. The long series of press-prosecutions, confiscations, abolition of the right of free speech and association, reckless deportations were hateful to Mr. Stead, and he protested against them with all his might. When the Bombay agent for the *Swaraj* conducted by Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal in London, was convicted on a charge of sedition in Bombay, Mr. Stead felt the conviction to be astounding; and he then thought of bringing out an Indian edition of the *Review of Reviews*, but gave up the idea, whether because he came to find the officialdom in India too stiff or for any other cause, is not known. He was very strongly in favour of His Majesty commemorating his visit to India by the prohibition of cow-slaughter, at least during his tour. But his suggestion was vigorously opposed in official circles. Mr. Stead also forcibly urged the release of all political offenders on the occasion of the Royal visit, but this suggestion of his fared no better than his former one. When Lord Morley was working at his Reform scheme in the Parliament, Mr. Stead wrote that it was ungrateful on his part, as on his *Guru* Mr. Gladstone's part in the case of the Irish question, to withhold the meed of praise to Mr. Tilak and other advanced political leaders in India, who were suffering the penalty of their foresight, for their services to the cause of the country. These men, said Mr. Stead, were the true teachers—"the tutors"—of the bureaucracy, and they must be held as the "real heroes of the new era" of conciliation and political reform. But how have these official "pupils" treated their teachers? The pupils may have felt a little bit uneasy at the haste with which these political *Gurus* set lessons for them, and so may have gently shut them up in close cells for a while. To this frame of mind Mr. Stead could reconcile

himself. But he could obviously see no reason now that the lesson set by them has been learnt, why they should be still kept in confinement. Mr. Stead's protests against the freaks of officialism in India have had much influence in directing the attention of the outside world to Indian affairs. Mr. Stead was a man of influence and world-reputation and it is impossible to believe that his advocacy of the cause of Young India may not have served to put the Indian problem among the important questions of the moment. His death, therefore, is a grave loss to India which it will be hardly possible to make up. (Nov 1912)

### Prof. Max Muller

The death of Prof. Max Muller has deprived England of one of her greatest scholars and India of one of her warmest friends abroad. The death of a cosmopolitan scholar and philanthropist, living upto the age of seventy-seven and having spent most of those years in an active pursuit of religious learning and in sincerely wishing good and nothing but good to the world, has an indescribable melancholy grandeur about it. Nor is it possible to estimate the loss which the nations of the world have to suffer on account of his death, nations which when he lived, fully recognised his value and greatness by bestowing on him some of the rare honours they had to confer. The case of India stands on a different footing altogether. This general benefactor of the world had claimed India specially as his own and no ordinary reasons would be enough to wholly account for the love he bore for this country. A great Sanskrit poet has said that "some mysterious cause always binds together certain things in this

world; and love and sympathy are never influenced by mere external circumstances." This proposition was never so true as in the case of Prof. Max Muller, who, though he had never even so much as seen India, still regarded this country as his own motherland. India was the one dream of his life and his soul yearned to the last, "to see Benares and to bathe in the sacred waters of the Ganges." Can this yearning be accounted for except by supposing that Prof. Max Muller was, in the last, if not in this, life a Hindu among the Hindoos? Here is one more "intimation", if you like, of the immortality of the soul; and how beautifully are Wordsworth's lines realised.

" Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting  
 " The soul that rises with us our life's star  
 " Hath had elsewhere its setting  
 " And cometh from after  
 " Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 " Not in utter nakedness."

The idea is indeed irresistibly charming that Prof. Max Muller had in him a Hindu soul, though from the land itself of the Hindus he was in the present life, perpetually exiled by fate. We all know how he was delighted to call himself मोक्षमुल्लस a Sanskritised name, in preference to his Christian name Max Muller. And we also know that those among us who have any idea of his love for and deep studies in Sanskrit literature always liked to indulge in thinking of him as an old revered *Rishi*. What a contrast does Prof. Max Muller present with Anglo-Indians? For, on the one hand, we have the man who, perhaps only reminiscent of his former birth in India and never coming face to face with the country of his love, lighted up his heart by the lamp of the Hindu religion and literature and proved a warm and benevolent and disinterested friend of the Hindus to the last. And, on the other hand, we have in the Anglo-

Indians men who spend the best part of their life in India, are enabled to make their fortunes out of the money of her people, and are entrusted by Providence with the glorious charge of the destinies of millions and yet who by the time they leave the country, either become traducers or unfair critics of the people, or carry at the best a lukewarm and indifferent benevolence in their hearts for them. It is suggested by certain Anglo-Indian cynics that a visit to India would have disturbed the comfortable conception of Indian Society, which the learned Sanskritist "had evolved in the placid processes of philosophical evolution," and that he would then have realised how the India of the classics is quite different from India as the Anglo-Indians know and the statesmen and administrators have to deal with. We all know what this means. But we think it to be a presumption on the part of these cynics to suppose that Prof. Max Muller was ignorant of the difference between the real condition of India and the condition as depicted by its classics. For the Professor knew for a fact such difference with regard to England and other Christian countries, and there is ample reason to suppose that his love for India was not the result of self-deception notwithstanding his cognisance of such difference with regard to this country. In his preface to his "Chips from a German workshop," Prof. Max Muller tells us that he would "never forget that deep despondency of a Hindu convert, a real martyr to his faith, who had pictured to himself from the pages of the new Testament what a Christian country must be, and who, when he came to Europe, found everything so different from what he had imagined in his lonely meditations at Benares." This completely refutes the theory that Prof. Max Muller's love for India and her people was based on ignorance of human nature. The Professor was by no means the first among

Europeans to disclose elements in the Sanskrit literature and the Hindoo religion which entitled the Hindoos to appreciation and admiration by foreigners. The work was begun by others before him nearly a century earlier ; and the names of Wilkins, Jones, Humboldt, Herder, Schlegel, Goethe, Burnouf and others are not unknown to us. But it was reserved to *him* to carry the work much further, make it thorough, and make it permanent. To him more than to any other orientalist, India owes that while the regions of her classics were successfully explored to the enlightenment of the Europeans, her good name and her real merits were for ever installed on an intellectual eminence which was a surprise and wonder to the Christian countries of the West. While enriching the English literature with some of the best ideas from the Sanskrit literature both in religious philosophy as well as the philosophy of religion, Prof. Max Muller earned for India esteem, admiration and regard which alone are the redeeming features of the present condition of this unfortunate country. He who bestows on this country charity or a political privilege may deserve our thanks. But he, who, like Prof. Max Muller, spreads to the wondering eyes of the world the beauties of the Hindu religion and literature, and who establishes the superiority of Hindu philosophy, renders us a service which cannot be too highly valued in these days.

Personally Prof. Max Muller was a noble example of learning, benevolence and cosmopolitan spirit all combined in one. Born a German he learnt English at a late stage in life, but soon became famous as one of the masters of that language. It was almost by an accident that he took up the study of Sanskrit, but he soon decided to make that language the study of his life, and by his herculean labours and perseverance he succeeded in mastering it as few had done before him. The idea of editing the

Vedas and interpreting the Vedanta marks no mean height of literary ambition for a foreigner ; and both the tasks have been accomplished by Prof. Max Muller with a wonderful conspicuousness of success. But he was by no means content with studying Sanskrit. He had practically made all the literatures and religions of the world his province. And the result of such deep learning on a mind instinct with worldwide sympathies was what may be expected. The professor was a cosmopolitan in the best sense of the word and feeling all the world kin, his heart went out to sympathise with distress wherever it was to be found. He had taken for his motto the maxim of Emperor Maximilian "I am a man, nothing pertaining to man I deem foreign to myself."

Being born in Germany, he adopted England as his second home ; and sailed through all his life in the interest of India. But all this is very natural in one who was so large-minded and Catholic as to cheerfully recognise that the Aryans were the true ancestors of the Teutonic race and that the Veda is the oldest book in which the first beginnings of the English language and all that is embodied in the language are to be found. It is true that born a Christian he faithfully stuck to that religion throughout his life. But as no one could be more Christian in spirit than he, so also no one was more alive to the defects of Christianity than he was. "To each individual" he has said "his own religion, if he really believes in it, is something quite inseparable from himself—something unique that cannot be compared to anything else or replaced by anything else. Our own religion is in that respect something like our own language. In its form it may be like other languages. In its *essence* and in its relation to ourselves it stands alone and admits of no peer or rival." These sentiments account for the



fact that while he continued to the last an unrepachable Christian he not only did not shrink from any comparison of Christianity with other religions, but felt no hesitation in making his own. If he said, we can teach something to the Brahmins in reading with them their sacred hymns, they too can teach us something when reading with us the gospel of Christ. He was like a gold miner, for whom every atom of sparkling dust has some charm, and he tried to discover, as well as he could, in even the most degraded forms of worship a spark of light that might lie hidden somewhere, a spark which may lighten and warm the heart.

Absorbed as his mind was in purely literary, philosophical and religious thoughts, Prof. Max Muller never gave a thought to politics. But inestimable has been the service which he consciously or unconsciously rendered in the field of that kind of politics which is concerned with the maintenance of good feeling between different classes of people. It is well-known how Prof. Max Muller's presence in England has been a factor in keeping a good understanding between the English and the Germans. Nor can a native of India be possibly unalive to the influence which the deceased Professor has all along exerted in making the British people regard the Indian people with *far greater respect* than they would have done otherwise. It is a mere detail but pregnant with great significance that he lent his signature to be the first on a petition which was presented to the Queen on behalf of Mr. Tilak while he was in prison, and which was mainly instrumental in securing his release six months before the end of his term. Here, we may be sure that he did not care one way or the other for the politics which brought about Mr. Tilak's incarceration. But the thought of an oriental scholar, and a gentleman toiling in the prison was a thought unbearable.

ble to him ; and we have all seen how his intercession had the effect of pouring oil on the troubled waters of both Native and Anglo-Indian feeling. In him India has lost the warmest friend, the wisest lover, and the most enthusiastic admirer whose place, alas ! will be filled we know not when !'

(4 11-1999)

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### M. Max O'rell

A humorist is a very precious asset in these days and the death of Max O'rell is an irreparable loss to the English knowing world. The deceased belonged to that class of rare men who have been successful in combining in themselves sound wisdom with a genial and enjoyable style of teaching it to the world. The growth of democratic sentiment has made plain-speaking indispensable, and it is humour alone that can save plain-speaking from becoming also dry and uninteresting speaking. When the aristocratic sentiment is in the ascendant the common style of speech is encumbered with forms of artificially dignified address and flowery phrases, the practical result of all of which is the creation of an atmosphere of insincerity, doubt and double-dealing. It is an invariable concomitant of the social commerce between unequals; and no court language in the world ever accommodated itself to pleasantry and mirth. But when it is a case of social commerce between equals all the restraints upon language are removed, and while clearness of expression becomes the gravitating point for style, the natural human tendency of creating and enjoying mirth all round finds ample scope. Even under aristocratic conditions of life, this tendency was found to be irresistible, and though mirth or humour

was never to be found in any court languages, still kings and queens have always been known to keep fools and jesters for their private pleasure. Under democratic conditions the profession of fools and jesters is gone, not because men have ceased to love pleasantry but because every one has begun to exercise his own powers of humour to the fullest without any restraint, so that the common stock of mirth has been incomparably great.

But although in a democratic age every one is at perfect liberty and also inclined to be humorous in speech and writing, still every one has not of course succeeded equally, and Max O'rell was among the few who did succeed pre-eminently in that direction. A Frenchman by birth, Max O'rell spent many years in England and enriched the English language with a number of popular books written in a humorous style. A study of these books will shew any one that though a humorist, Max O'rell has used humour only as a means, the end being the spread of wisdom among the people. Humour of course is a tendency of mind to run in particular directions of thought and feeling more amusing than accountable. But though these directions are less accountable than amusing, still it cannot be gainsaid that the essence of all true humour is sensibility, sound and warm; and it is such sensibility that we meet with in Max O'rell's writings. As for the efficacy of humour we might quote Max O'rell's own words in the matter. "Humour," says this humorist, "is much more than the divine saving grace it is often called. It is the greatest power on earth and the greatest power for good too. It is the most effective stimulant to cheerfulness and therefore happiness. It is the outcome of philosophy and simplicity in character. It is the antidote to conceit. It is the quintessence of commonsense, and it is to be regretted that the governments of the

world are not carried on by humorists. They would prevent nations from making fools of themselves. They would not only see the horrors of war but the ridicule of it. They would make people understand that the way to teach them how to live is not to kill them. They would stop the swaggering of the idiotic so called patriotism and replace it by good fellowship. They would change flags from rags used to excite nations to the hatred of one another into emblems of brotherhood and good understanding." We do not know how far would the claim of humorists to be entrusted with government's be recognised, but there is at least as much sense in what Max O'rell says in this connection as there was in the famous speech made by Lord Rosebury two years ago when he declared that merchants and men of business were more fitted than any one else to carry on political governments. The point of course is that even in carrying on such serious business as that of a political government what could be done in a serious mood would be certainly better done in a humorous mood. Even a serious man like Carlyle has committed himself to the observation that "the man who cannot laugh is not only fit for treasons, stratagem and spoils, but his own life is already a treason and a stratagem."

Max O'rell of course had no chance of conducting any political Government, but his books shew clearly enough what view he took of human life and human mind. The best known book of Max O'rell is "John Bull and his Island." It is deservedly famous; for it not only grapples with a delicate subject in a successful manner, but it discloses the deep insight which he had into human nature and his power of incisive criticism through the channel of ridicule. The antagonism and mutual prejudice between Englishmen and Frenchmen is well known, and yet 'John Bull and his

Island' is such a subtle, such a correct, and such a skilful exposition of the English character that it accomplishes its purpose without offending Englishmen, and is at the same time a merciless exposure of their defects and a warm appreciation of merits.

(14-7-1907)

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## Mark Twain

It may perhaps seem strange that the death of Mark Twain should be made the subject of an article in a journal mainly addressed to the Indian population. But a closer consideration will show that as one of the most popular writers in the English language at the present day, Mark Twain was universally regarded by young educated India as a literary asset of great value. And you could hardly find a single respectable library throughout this country in which Mark Twain is conspicuous by his absence. It is true that this American author is not perhaps so widely read in India as the English humorist of the eighteenth century—Goldsmith. But on the other hand there is not the slightest doubt that Mark Twain has been shown infinitely greater attention than any of the contemporary English humorists, including George Meredith and Chesterton. Mark Twain was already widely read and appreciated before he actually visited India, and delivered his humorous lectures at some of the principal literary centres in the country. And since he left India, he created abiding bonds of interest between himself and the Indian people by including some clever and true sketches of Indian life in his book entitled 'The New Tramps Abroad.' Even now that he is dead and gone his memory will remain ever green in India, for the important reason

that his humour has founded a new school altogether of literary style in some of the important Indian Vernaculars.

The humour of Mark Twain is peculiarly suited to democracy. Democracy, it is said, has its own methods as well as its own ideals. And one of the methods of democracy for inculcating and propagating truth has been, according to a principle laid down by Horace, through a laugh. *Rudentem dicere verum quid vetat* ? In the bygone ages when the genius of Monarchy and Oligarchy prevailed, the gulf between superiors and inferiors was always too wide to be covered by social commerce; and the beautiful plant of laughter never thrives except under the genial atmosphere of social equality. The advancing spirit of democracy has, however, changed all this. Healthy laughter has always been the rich power of democracy; and the invariable concomitance of the two has been seen to hold good as much in the ages before Christ was born as in the twentieth century. Mark Twain is only as characteristic of the greatest and the most successful democracy of the present age, we mean the United States of America, as Aristophanes was of the first successful democracy in the history of mankind, viz. that in Greece. As for Aristophanes's comedies, they supplied the place of the political journal, the literary review, the popular caricature, and the party pamphlet known to our own times. (*Vide Aristophanes*—by Rev. Lucas Collins.) On the other hand the value of Mark Twain's humorous writings as a vehicle of popular instruction is too well recognised to need mention. The service of Democracy to laughter lies in this that it has brought laughter in the market place and got it legitimatised by the public. In the ages of Monarchy and Oligarchy laughter was looked upon with scorn as if it was a mere bastard, not fit to be openly exhibited and owned. Under the auspices of Democracy

it has been identified and recognised as being born in lawful wedlock between its parents, the serious and the sublime on the one hand and the comic or the humorous on the other. And the child is to be seen not only owned but caressed and kissed in public.

Witty and humorous writings have now been universally raised to the status and have assumed the dimensions of a department in literature; and it is regarded as an extremely rare accomplishment in a public man to be able to deliver witty and humorous speeches in a happy style. Laughter in its turn has rendered gratefully meritorious service to Democracy. For it has, more than any other agency, succeeded in rounding of the angularities of character, in levelling up assumed and artificial barriers of position and in facilitating the realisation of the doctrinal equality of men. Laughter, when enjoyed in common, is the most potent instrument of creating sympathy and the transmission of the qualities of the heart from one man to another. Those who have had occasions to address public meetings of a mixed character must have found out by experience that it is much easier to produce a laugh so that all may heartily join in it than to produce a heavy or serious sentiment in which all may equally share. Moreover, the speaker who can in the course of his address or discourse get his audience once or twice to heartily laugh with him—or better still without him—need not look for any other guarantee that his words will carry conviction far more effectually than any aid drawn from rhetoric.

The humorists are, in our opinion, the real philanthropists in this world, and the value of laughter is as well recognised for individual or private life, as for corporations and governments. 'Laugh and be fat' is an oft repeated maxim, and though it would be unreasonable to seek to

trace obesity in every case to this cause, still Falstaff, who was 'about a yard and more at the waist' could have certainly claimed that it was all due to his love of laughter more than anything else. The Italian proverb that 'laughter makes good blood' is as much true in the literal as in the metaphorical sense; and most men add by laughing heartily, fragments to their life without being conscious of it. Tennyson has rightly said that a good laugh is a sunshine in the house. But perhaps no one has spoken more emphatically on this subject than Carlyle whose opinion deserves special weight because he was generally regarded as a taciturn cynic incapable of hearty laugh. Speaking negatively he says, "The man who cannot laugh is not only fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils, but his own life is already a treason and a stratagem." In another place he says, "*No man who has once wholly and heartily laughed can be altogether irreclaimably bad.*" No doubt the scripture pronounces "a blessing on the weeper and a woe on the laugher." But Archdeacon Hare has explained the text by saying that "they who weep are declared to be blessed because they *shall laugh*, and the woe threatened to the laughers is in like manner that they shall mourn and weep."

As a man Mark Twain was a self-made man. He began life from the lowest rung of the ladder; and though he has now left a million dollars behind him, still there were periods in his career when he was deeply involved in debts caused by enterprising speculation as a publisher. But like Sir Walter Scott he made up his losses by sheer work and scorned to receive charity though offered by only well-meaning admirers. He was tired of the fret and worry of debt; but at the same time he was of opinion that it was not permissible for a man whose case was not hopeless to shift his burdens to other men's shoulders. As a man of



the world, again, he had his own cares and bereavements. He had often to lay aside, as he said, his cap and bell, and mourn and weep. But so far as his relations with the world were concerned, he always pleased them, made them laugh and also made them wise. It is somewhat difficult to give an idea of his humour to those who have never read him. But we may say that whoever reads any of his books will hardly proceed over a few pages before recognising that through the book there was talking to him a man, who commanded a nice felicity of expression, a deep insight into human nature, the quickness to mark and the courage to point out its weaknesses, an exuberance of animal spirits, susceptibility to the ludicrous and incongruous aspect of things, a somewhat over-stepping exuberance of wild fancy, a liking for practical joking, a sublime disregard of convention and unhesitating readiness to deal with pure but undemeaning vulgarity. His technique is no doubt superior to his polish. But beneath his spontaneous, quaint, extravagant humour, you have a substratum of wisdom and philosophy which are as valuable as the humour. In this connection we may recommend the maxims in his 'Pudden head Wilson's New Calendar.' Therein you meet with his sarcasm, his irony, his pathos and all. We give only a few instances.

'To be good is noble; but to show others how to be good is nobler and no trouble.'

'When in doubt tell the truth.'

'Honesty is the best policy, but sometimes the appearance of it is worth six of it.'

'Pity is for the living; envy is for the dead.'

'There is no humour in Heaven.'

'Man will do many things to get himself loved; he will do all things to get himself envied.'

'There are many scape-goats of our sins; but the most popular is Providence.'

'Few of us can stand prosperity—other men's, I mean.'

'Don't part with your illusions; when they are gone, you may still exist, but you have ceased to live.'

'In statesmanship let the formalities be right; never mind the moralities.'

Among his works the 'Innocents Abroad' is most famous, but not the best. 'Prince and Pauper' is a work of wit in which one distinct idea finds complete and continuous development and which also shows his dramatic instinct. 'Huckleberry Finn' is most popular among his own countrymen. But if you want to have a real insight into Mark Twain you must read his sketches and short stories. Mark Twain is now dead; but his works contain an exhaustible fund of good humour and are destined to enjoy a long life after him. Even in 'the battle of books' they are sure to make a stand and succeed. (1-5-1910)

### Nana Fadanvis

To-day is the closing day of the first century since the death of one of the great statesmen that India has ever produced. Balaji Janardan Bhanu, familiarly known to the world as Nana Fadanvis, and the greatest of the ministers under the Peshwai, departed from this world exactly a hundred years ago. The omnivorousness of time is proverbial; and the Deccan of to-day has practically nothing left in common with the Deccan of Nana Fadanvis's time. But there is one thing, at any rate, which even this omnivorous time cannot eat up. It is human memory which, like a thread, keeps up the continuity of any number of generations or ages. To the present generation of Nana Fadanvis's countrymen the Peshwai with all its glory is a thing of the irrevocable past.

But even as it is, one such sublime touch of memory as that now given by tomorrow's centenary of Nana Fadanvis is enough to translate them in spirit a century backwards and to make them feel, though for a short-lived moment, that they are, as it were, once more under the Peshwai. On the dark page of oblivion their memory may write her "light beam" pictures, though the sudden awakening and deep insight into the bottom of the abyssmal century may spring in their minds mere unavailing regrets.

To the uneducated, and those also among the educated class who are not intimately acquainted with history, Nana Fadanvis is a man of rare and fabulous wisdom, a very phenomenon of shrewdness and sagacity, but possibly nothing more. Those, however, who have read history to some purpose know and recognise that Nana Fadanvis was not a mere intellectual acrobat but a practical statesman, who welded his intellect to consolidate the Maratha Empire and to heighten its glory. The instinctive admiration for Nana Fadanvis by his countrymen has been fast ripening into a rational appreciation. This result has been brought about by the gradual discovery of authentic materials of the History of the Marathas. It is due to Englishmen to say that among them were found men who have done a great deal to preserve the memory of Nana Fadanvis. While in India what the people knew about Nana Fadanvis till very recently was recorded in Bakhars and traditions. Col. Briggs was the first to publish the autobiography of the great statesman in England so early as 1827. Briggs, it is said, carried with him to England about 11,000 letters and other papers relating to Maratha history; and among these were many of the authentic documents which belonged to Nana Fadanvis's estate at Menawali and Poona. In 1851 Capt. Macdonnald published in England a biography of Nana Fadanvis. Later

on Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay, made an effort to collect the materials of a life of Nana Fadanvis through the late Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik. It was only about 20 or 25 years ago that the attention of Nana's own countrymen was first directed towards the subject of rescuing the available materials of Maratha history from destruction and of publishing the same. What material now remains is perhaps an infinitesimal fraction of what actually existed before curious Englishmen appropriated and removed it, the Inam Commission destroyed it, and time and neglect made havoc with it. Within the last 10 or 15 years, however, the people of the Deccan have become alive to an appreciation of such material, and we may be sure that most of the now available material will be soon hunted out and published in course of time.

It goes without saying that the discovery of this new material will serve to greatly alter the opinion which had till recently prevailed about Nana Fadanvis. But even before the discovery of such material, the public opinion about Nana was complimentary enough. Many of the Europeans, who were in India contemporaneously with Nana Fadanvis, have recorded independent testimony to his character and capacity. In his letter of condolence to the Peshwa, written soon after the death of Nana Fadanvis, Lord Mornington observed as follows: "The loss of persons distinguished for their talents, great qualities and abilities is at all times a subject of regret. The melancholy news, therefore, of the death of Balaji Pandit, the able minister of your State, whose upright principles and honorable views, and whose zeal for the welfare and prosperity both of his own immediate superiors and of other powers were so justly celebrated, occasion extreme grief and concern." Mr. Mallet, the British Resident at Poona has given his testimony as follows:—"As long as

Nana remained supreme at the Poona Court they (the British) should never dream of obtaining a firm footing in the Maratha Kingdom." Torrence, in his "Empire in Asia," has written on the same subject as follows:—"With him has departed all the wisdom and moderation of his government." Mr. J. Sullivan, writing to Col. Briggs in 1850, says:—"give us Nana Fadanvis and such like. What poor pigmies we are as Indian administrators when compared with natives of that stamp!"

Even at the valuation of European experts, Nana Fadanvis would have to be classed with some of the greatest European statesmen of this century. It would not at all be easy to specify the exact points of comparison between the renowned Maratha statesman and Mr. Gladstone, or Prince Bismark, or Count Cavour for instance. But there can be no doubt that Nana Fadanvis was as highly patriotic as any of these, and fully as useful to his country as a practical statesman. Mr. Gladstone's statesmanship was manifested in the advancement of the material prosperity of England and great domestic reforms in peace time. Prince Bismark led up his fatherland to the pinnacle of glory and influence by his aggressive and successful foreign policy and the bold organisation of the German Army. Count Cavour had shewn greatest sagacity and statesmanship by taking the fullest advantage of the opportunities afforded to him by fortune as well as by creating, by his enterprising genius, new opportunities for raising Italy in the estimation of her neighbours, pushing forward her interest everywhere and thus inspiring into the hearts of his countrymen confidence about themselves. The work which Nana Fadanvis did was without doubt equally, if not more, useful to his country in its peculiar circumstances. Under his guidance the Marathas conquered new territories in Northern and Southern India.

kept the Nizam and other unfriendly powers in effective submission. But the negative kind of work which he did in successfully keeping the English at an arm's length, and thereby preventing Raghobadada from ruining the empire was, if anything, more useful than all the other services he rendered to his State.

If such was Nana Fadanvis, it is interesting to inquire what made him the great statesman that he was. The most striking thing about Nana's statesmanship is his great foresight, sound judgment and broad comprehensive views. None of these things could be acquired in any school or college of politics. In fact, he was not acquainted with politics or political economy as a science. Further, it was not his position alone or his experience or intellect that could by itself account for his great achievements. Even in his own time, there were men in the Peshwai who had at their command most of the advantages which may be supposed to have benefitted him. Ramshastri, the greatest judicial administrator under the Peshwai, and Sakharam Bapu, one of the wisest of men, could not certainly be less intelligent than Nana Fadanvis. Men like Malharrao Holkar were riper in years and experience than Nana Fadanvis and actually commanded one of the army divisions at Panipat. It could, therefore, be hardly said that the breadth of view which Nana showed might have been acquired by him only by his travels in the far North and instructive acquaintance with politics of that variety which the complicated conditions of Northern India then afforded. As for position his cousin Morobadada was certainly in no way handicapped, and was as highly situated and thick with the Peshwas as Nana. Where then is to be found the key to Nana's success? Of course, all the circumstances detailed above had their own effect in

contributing to the make up of the fabric of Nana's statesmanship.

But I for one feel inclined to believe that to all these advantages Nana added a patriotism which was peculiarly his own. This patriotism consisted of an intense love for the Peshwa and through it of his country; and this love was coupled with a subtle self-denial which made him place the well-being of the State rather than anything else always near to his heart. He had an intense faith in his own wisdom and strong will and rich resourcefulness of the head to make or bring round all else to accept his own policy. These were the essential characteristics of Nana's statesmanship; and the natural advantages of position he enjoyed only afforded a better field for his statesmanship to take seed in. A man possessing all the qualities of Nana Fadanvis and all that patriotism of his would, if thrown in such times as the present for example, be simply wasted and make no impression. Nana Fadanvis, if born under British rule, would perhaps rise only as high as a Deputy Collector. But born in an age in which ability had scope to prove itself to be all it was worth, Nana Fadanvis rose up to the position of the Prime Minister of one of the most important and powerful governments in India at the time.

Nana may be said to have lived and breathed politics since his very birth. He had inherited nobility of two generations and was educated for high office in company with the Peshwa's own children. He was in the innermost circle at the Peshwa's Court and admitted to the secret councils even while a boy in his teens. It is said that all the letters written by Bhao Saheb Peshwa from the field of Panipat to Nana Saheb Peshwa at Poona were in the handwriting of Nana Fadanvis. After this kind of education it is no wonder that when Madhavrao I. pre-

vailed upon him to take up administration, he at once proved himself to have been very well fitted up for one of the highest offices of trust and responsibility. When Nana entered office he was barely 24; and yet he could successfully manage a whole cabinet department of the State without undergoing any previous apprenticeship. Ministership under the Peshwa at that time was, however, no sinecure. The revenue of the Peshwa was at that time about 8 cores of rupees; and the territory of administration extended far into the Northern and Southern India. Besides a number of powerful and somewhat irresponsible military captains had to be kept well under control and obedience. And yet Nana administered the state with such conspicuous success that one of the few consolations that Madhavrao I. felt on his death-bed was the thought of having such a competent and trusted minister to take charge of the state which he had reluctantly to leave behind in the middle of his glorious career.

It is not very difficult to deduce Nana Fadanvis's principles from a review of his administration extending over more than 25 years. First and foremost of these principles may be said to be loyalty to his master, the Peshwa. The relations of his own with those of the Peshwa family were so intimate that his love for the Peshwas was very intense. But as among the different members of the Peshwa family his regard and loyalty was strictly regulated by considerations of ability and usefulness to the cause of the Empire. This explains his affection for Madhavrao I. on the one hand and his implacable opposition to Raghobadada and Bajecrao II. on the other. Even outside the Peshwa family his likes and dislikes were regulated by the same principle, *viz.*, the well-being of the State. Most of the prominent Brahmin and Maratha captains alternately shared his pleasure and displea-



sure; but one may be sure that Nana's reasons were always sound and what may be called patriotic, rarely sentimental and never selfish. It has to be admitted, at any rate, that no instance has up to this time been alleged or found in which the object of Nana's alliance or enmity was personal advancement as divorced from the supreme well-being of the State. The idea of a Maratha confederacy, as pursued by Nana Fadanvis might be original or might be borrowed. But nobody had ever before or after done so much as Nana Fadanvis did to concentrate all the forces at his command to consolidate the Maratha Empire. His genius was of a constructive kind; and it always went to work from the basis of combination and union. No doubt he weakened individuals, but it was only in order that so much more strength should be secured to the system. This was best exemplified in his policy towards Mahadji Shindia, who had grown so influential and powerful and at the same time so fond of the English as to become a danger to the State. Another principle of Nana Fadanvis's administration was his almost instinctive distrust of foreigners. He had a wonderfully far-seeing vision which brought within his political ken the dangers which were in store for the Maratha Empire on account of the pushing and diplomatic Englishman. Occasionally he showed marked partiality for one class of foreigners as the French for instance, but that was to play him off against another. Torrence in his "Empire in Asia" has made the following observations regarding this aspect of Nana's statesmanship. "As long as the Darbar of Poona contained a minister capable of penetrating the esoteric meaning of viceregal policy and of holding up the hands of his feeble chief, the independence of his country though frequently imperilled was preserved. Nana Fadanvis had for many years been the real ruler of the State contriving generally

to keep on good terms with the Company without being entangled in obligation, the effect of which he looked upon with dread. He avowed his respect and admiration for the English but shrank from their political embrace; and whatever dangers might impend, he steadily refused to accept their offers of permanent armed assistance. "One of the chief reasons why he so opposed Raghobadada tooth and nail is that he had sought the assistance of the English to be reinstated; and in this imprudent alliance Nana vividly saw the germs of a dangerous entanglement. Nana's prognostications were fully realised. Raghobadada had, in fact, been the cause of the English getting a foot-hold in the Maratha Politics which ultimately proved fatal to the Empire. Notwithstanding all this, Nana's mind was too catholic not to appreciate and admire the good qualities of the foreigners whom he distrusted so much.

Nana Fadanvis had most of the accomplishments of a real statesman. He was a past master in the art of getting speedy and reliable information from every part of the country. He commanded the means of knowing, while sitting in his room, everything of importance that was occurring from day to day at the different royal courts in India. The working of his intelligence department was so perfect that half a dozen or dozen accounts of every important occurrence in any part of the country reached him from different sources within a reasonable time; so that sitting in his chamber, Nana could easily judge of the corroborative value of the different versions and arrive at a conclusion which was nearer truth than any single one of those accounts. Nana had maps prepared of every important position in India; and his news agents supplied him such news as that Bussee left France for Madagaskar or that the Dutch and the French had risen against the English in Europe. In point of civil administration Nana's work

has been recognised to be the best that could be produced under the circumstances. The Peshwas' diaries, which have recently been searched with a view to publish selections from them, show that though the Peshwas were hardly ever off the harness, still the odd moments of peace that were got were turned to good account by Nana Fadanvis for laying down a system of administration on a peace footing. Mr. Sullivan writing to Col. Briggs in 1850 has made the following remarks:—"Pray don't give the enemy an advantage by speaking in unqualified terms of the bad government of our predecessors. Considering the incessant wars and revolutions in which they had been engaged for a full century after the Mogal empire broke up, it is quite a wonder that there was any government at all. Yet in the midst of incessant fightings the civil institutions were undisturbed and almost everywhere the country was flourishing. Since our last good piece of work, when we put down the Pendhari ravages in 1818, we have held India with such an iron grasp that hardly a shot has been fired in our territory; but what have we made of this quiet interval? The Government is more in debt, and I doubt if the people are so rich." The judicial administration in Nana's time was entirely based on the panchayat or the jury system. The community and the village tried its own offenders and Government came in only as an umpire to decide the cases of difference of opinions between private arbitrators. The judicial administration under British rule is certainly a more elaborate system but one may doubt if, after all, from the point of view of the discovery of truth and the enforcement of justice the old panchayat system was not equally, if not more, effective.

As observed by Sir Richard Temple, "natives of India, howsoever intelligent and capable, have no scope in these

days to exhibit their administrative capacity or diplomatic statesmanship." It is, therefore, refreshing to turn to the last statesman which the Maratha nation produced and but for whom that nation might have been destroyed earlier than it actually was. Well may the Marathas be proud of a name that proves beyond doubt the high capacity of their race for administrative and diplomatic work—the work of founding or consolidating an empire. The memory of such a man and the services he rendered to the State in his own days cannot but be a source of inspiration to the younger generation who, though differently circumstanced, require a grand ideal to be placed before them. A race that produced Nana Fadavis only a century ago need not despair of its future.

(18, 1900)

### Dadabhai Naoroji

Born in 1825, Mr. Dadabhai to-day reaches his 92nd year. In point of longevity, therefore, he creates a record which no public man in India, to my knowledge, ever broke before, or is, in all human probability, likely to break in future. Those whom the Gods love, it is said, die young. But the Gods must certainly be very malicious or perverse-minded people, if we could suppose that they would not love a pre-eminently lovable man like Dadabhai. One would willingly become an atheist if he be told on the semblance of anything like authority that virtues like those possessed by Mr. Dadabhai could not constitute a valid claim to become the beloved of the Gods. Mr. Dadabhai's wonderful old age proves not only the purity of his life: but it also proves that he possesses a mind of the right constitution that has preserved his body and needs

no elixir extraneous to itself. 'The Grand Old Man' may be a borrowed phrase; but we should be proud that we in tropical India possess a genuine Śwadeshi article, corresponding to that phrase, the like of which could not be shown by any of the cold-preserved countries in Europe. Mr. Gladstone who was a phenomenally long-lived English statesman died in his 89th year. The Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria is the oldest monarch that ever occupied a throne in Europe. He is now in his 86th year. Mr. Dadabhai is not only grand by his old age but also old in grandeur. It is not that his worth appeals to us because of its special setting of a remarkable old age; but he had already commanded and earned the respect, esteem, nay, the gratitude, of his fellow-countrymen throughout India, at a time when some of the oldest among our other public men, who are now alive, were either not born, or being born were yet in their swaddling clothes, both literally as well as figuratively.

As the late Mr. Raniade rightly remarked, Dadabhai is a typical man among men whom it is given to mankind to see perhaps once in a century. And, what is more, he is a man who has actually occupied nearly a whole century by his own life. He was born only 4 years after the death of Napoleon Bonaparte in Europe, and seven years after the fall of the Peshwai in the Deccan. He was, therefore, as much a contemporary of the makers of history just after the close of the 18th century, as of the makers of history in the dawn of the 20th century. Moreover, he is not such a dead joining-link between centuries as hills and mountains, but he actually connects two centuriāl epochs by a bridge of spirit and consciousness. He has not been a mere silent or passive witness of his times, but an active agent, who was strenuously digging, by an iron will, riches in the rock of his surroundings and circumstances for his

nation to climb up and regenerate. His experience of a century as an earnest political worker must be extremely valuable for its mass of rich contents as well as for the generalisations it teaches, regarding the development and progress of the policy of British rule in India, parallel with which has run his own endeavour to effect and change it for the better. And thus you see side by side two very instructive—though perhaps pathetically instructive—evolutions.

In Dadabhai we find a curious mixture of hope and despair. And we may perhaps explain the paradox by saying that, while the distant future gave him great hope, the immediate prospect filled him with despair. Or we might also say that while his hope still comes from the British spirit in England, he has been driven to despair by the British in India. He still feels that there is British rule in Britain itself, but he is absolutely convinced that the British rule in India is entirely Un-British. Speaking as President of the National Congress at Calcutta in 1886, he said, "We should persevere, having confidence in the conscience of England, and resting assured that the English nation will grudge no sacrifice, to prove the sincerity of their desire to do whatever is just and right." Speaking again as President of the Congress at Lahore in 1893 he said, "The British people are willing to grant what is shown to be reasonable," and he may well say that because in June in the same year the House of Commons had passed a resolution in favour of the Simultaneous Civil Service Examinations. But all that changed by the time he had again to preside over the Congress at Calcutta in 1906. He now felt challenged, as it were, to give an answer to the question, "What has your hopefulness brought you after all?" And his reply was a pathetic confession that his hopefulness was still a hope. I will

in fact give his very words. "In 1853 when I made my first little speech at the inauguration of the Bombay Association, in perfect innocence of heart, influenced by my English education into great admiration for the character, instincts and struggles for liberty of the British people, I expressed my faith and confidence in the British rulers. If an Association like this be always in readiness to ascertain by strict enquiries and to memorialise Government on behalf of the people, our kind Government will not refuse to listen to such memorials. Such was my faith.....And now owing to the non-fulfilment of solemn pledges, what a change has taken place in the mind of the educated. Since my early efforts I must say that I have felt so many disappointments as would be sufficient to break any heart, and lead one to despair and even, I am afraid, to rebel; my disappointments have not been of the ordinary kind, but far worse and keener. I fought and won on several occasions, but the *executive* did not let us have the fruit of those victories."

Now even after that admission of despair, Dadabhai, quite true to his irrepressible optimism, again tried to make an effort to rally round his hopefulness. But the hopefulness this time came not from his faith in the readiness of the Bureaucracy to do justice and concede well-reasoned demands, but from another source altogether. For says Dadabhai, "I have not despaired under the influence of the good English word Persevere." His reliance was thus now evidently upon the Indian nation to work out its salvation, by the moral strength of its great cause. And there is reason to believe that Dadabhai has ever since held the same view and will probably pass away with that view unchanged.

Starting with a faith in constitutional agitation in England, Dadabhai ended practically with a faith in consti-

tutional agitation in India. His gospel of agitation remained intact ; only its venue was materially altered. Then again we must notice one more change that came over Dadabhai, in his evolution as a statesman and a politician. He started on his agitation with the modest demand for the removal of the British boycott upon the natives of India so far as the Civil Services were concerned ; he ended with the ambitious demand for Swarajya, Home Rule or Self-government and nothing less than Self-government. It is interesting to see that Dadabhai actually opened his Presidential address in 1906 by the significant sentence, quoted from Sir H. Campbell Bannerman's speech, that "Good Government could never be a substitute for Self-Government." According to the strict logic of the doctrine of moderation, the rejection of a small demand should lead to a demand smaller than the original one. But here you have Dadabhai reversing the process and actually making the rejection of a small demand the basis of a demand very much larger than the original one. He says in effect to the government, "You have refused my demand for the admission of natives of India to the Civil Service by the holding of simultaneous examinations, though you knew, as well as I did, that the number getting in through that door could not be very large. All right, my reply now to that rebuff is that you shall grant to us not only the simultaneous examinations, but Self-government itself." Now you must not suppose, however, that Dadabhai's new and larger demand is the result merely of his perverse-mindedness. But the larger demand was only a logical consequence of the rejection of the smaller demand. For unless the root cause of a malady were removed, the troublesome symptoms would never disappear completely. I have read in one of Napoleon's biographies that when in a well-known battle his chief-of-staff came and



reported that a particular division of his troops could not advance in the desired direction on account of the fire of a battery of Australian artillery, he quietly replied, "All right, then capture the battery itself." So also when Dadabhai found that the Civil Service put obstacles in the way of political reform he naturally had to direct an attack upon that Service itself.

Though gentle by nature, Dadabhai has never allowed that gentleness to interfere with the expression of his honest convictions. He was never deterred by the fear that Government might not like his phraseology. Thus while his loyalty to the Crown remained unswerving, he was of opinion that however good the British Government may be it can never weaken the nation's demand for Self-Government. He always demanded that the system of British administration must be entirely changed. If any two men among us were universally admitted to be studiously circumspect and cautious, in their written or spoken word about Government, they were the late Mr. Justice Ranade and the late Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale. And both of them had openly declared that Dadabhai could not be blamed for the unpleasant language that he might have used. Thus while speaking about Dadabhai Mr. Ranade observed:—"It might be said that in this work of reconciliation Mr. Dadabhai's extreme position had not been as helpful and as serviceable to the cause of the country as one might expect. But I have studied his writings and his speeches carefully and attentively, and would fearlessly and unhesitatingly observe that there was not a single sentence or expression, not even the most casual, which could be pointed out in support of the allegation that Mr. Dadabhai had created a gulf which did not previously exist. This is a calumny which would never lessen the affection and esteem in which the people held him. When he said that

the phenomenal poverty of India must cause anxiety both to the dominant and protected classes, he said nothing but the truth. It was to the highest interests of both Great Britain and India to acknowledge that truth. It was of no use to ignore facts when those facts were proved, and in Mr. Dadabhai's case, I would assure you that there was not a single sentence or figure put down in any of his books which did not represent mature thought and lifelong study.

Also says Mr. Gokhale in his speech on a day like this in 1905. "When such a gentleman is driven to the use of bitter language, there must be something in the situation to him so bitter. And the responsibility for his bitterness must, therefore, lie not on him but on those who make the situation what it is. Take the writings of Dadabhai of his earliest years, take even his writings of muddle age; and I say without the least fear of contradiction that no one will be able to lay his finger on a single word, which in any way can be described as bitter. If latterly he has been using language which to some people may appear too strong, it is because he finds that he has been all these years like one crying in the wilderness, also because he finds, as we all find, that for some years past the ideals of British rule in this country are being steadily lowered. Whether Mr. Dadabhai used mild words or bitter words, our place is round his standard-by his side. Whoever repudiates Dadabhai he is none of us. Whoever tries to lay rude and irreverent hands on him, strike him down."

In my humble opinion Mr. Gokhale has given a quite correct analysis of Dadabhai's bitter language. For half a century Dadabhai's soul as a patriot was fed on his faith in the solemn pledges of the British Nation to do justice to India. Redemption of those pledges was be-

coming more and more remote and this made him inconsolable. To put it in the witty words of a political orator, Dadabhai made the unfortunate discovery that these solemn pledges were like some American roads "which opened stately enough with beautiful trees planted on either side to tempt the traveller, but soon became narrower and narrower, and ended in a squirrel track and ran up a tree." So did the pledges tempt Mr. Dadabhai at the mouth of the broad avenue. But when he pursued the quest, he found them become narrower and narrower in fulfilment, ending as it seemed to him in a squirrel-track, the India Office, to the tree which was in this case the autocratic State Secretary for India. Dadabhai could neither climb nor even shake the tree and naturally he found himself mortified for his pains and in a ridiculous position.

I have so far tried to give an analysis and an estimate of Dadabhai's principles. These principles are embodied in his speech as President of the Congress in 1906. That speech is not, as some of his opponents pretend to believe, the final explosion of a damaged blunderbuss, but an utterance of a political seer, ringing with the true ring of prophetic Truth. His words and utterances are an eternal monument to Dadabhai's patriotism. Dadabhai can now speak no more; nor need he speak any more. He has already done enough to earn the nation's gratitude. And on this his 92nd birth-day, let us all, young and old, join in paying him our tribute.

I can imagine the minds of hundreds of people in this country turned just at this moment towards Versova to have a mental vision of Dadabhai Naoraji. There sits the Nestor of Indian patriots looking across the sea, quite prepared to jump at any moment into eternity, though reluctant to leave the land for which he has laboured.

through life, but which has not yet achieved the destiny that he thinks is her due. In Dadabhai Naoroji I often fancy the Grand Old Man of the Mahabharat, the venerable Bhishma. For even like Bhishma the warrior, Mr. Dadabhai the statesman is, after a lifelong battle—royal, lying stretched on a bed of arrows, with nothing more comfortable than an arrow for his pillow. For are not the infirmities of old age in themselves a torment? Like Bhishma too, he is encircled with the respectful admiration of friend and foe alike, who forget their political enmity for the moment, instinctively lay down their weapons of controversy, and join hands in reverential worship of the heroic soul who is preparing for his departure. Like Bhishma also, the sage of Versova occasionally addresses words of wisdom and good-will to the Government as well as the people. And like Bhishma in fine, is Dadabhai now practising yoga, as it were, and waiting, for the gates of heaven to open in the northerly course of India's Sun. Before old age, said Seneca, it was *my care to live well*; in old age, it was to *die well*. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has, as we all know, lived always well. His was a pure and well regulated life; and we may be sure that when death may come in the end, which however may, by God's grace, be long, very long in coming, it will come to him only as it should *viz.* as a finishing touch suited to the picture of life that has been noble in its work and achievement. (1-2-16)

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### Sir P. M. Mehta

By the sad and sudden death of the Hon. Sir P. M. Mehta a colossal figure has been removed from the scene of public life, more particularly the political life of India. Though intimate with but a few, he was well-known throughout the length and breadth of the country as an independent and forceful leader, and was universally admired and respected in that capacity. He was in one sense like the 'Veiled prophet of Khorasan' who, though hardly visible to his followers, inspired them with a peculiar awe and faith in himself. The proudest patrician among the contemporary race of metropolitans, he succeeded in maintaining throughout his life a position hardly inferior to that of an Emperor or a Sultan with all that the term connotes. It is given to very few people indeed like Sir Pherozeshaha to be the farthest removed from a people in point of actual contact and yet to be reckoned as a popular tribune that may be relied on under any conditions to defend the national cause without fear or favour if he was once convinced of its merits. Born in 1845 he was a very Nestor in public life to the present generation of public men. He was indeed junior by about twenty years to the Grand Old Man of India—we mean Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji; but taken by himself he was now the only survivor of that past generation of public men in Bombay, who may be said to have laid the foundation of public life in this part of the country. After a brilliant University career, during which period he had greatly endeared himself to a distinguished educationist, and a teacher of young men like the late Sir Alexander Grant, he was sent to England to study for the Bar and returned with a valuable equipment for his future life. Unlike the common run of barristers he simultaneously took up professional

and public duties which, if judiciously managed, creditably act and react upon each other. As a counsel Mr. Mehta was not long in winning laurels, and his name will always be associated with three criminal cases of a more or less public character, viz the Bombay Tower of Silence Case, the Surat Riots Case, and the Kolhapur Defamation Case. If the first two cases gave a great name to him in Bombay and Gujrat, the third case in which the late Mr. Agarkar and Mr. Tilak were charged with having defamed the then Diwan of Kolhapur, ensured his fame in the Deccan. But we need not dwell any more upon the success of his career as an advocate. Suffice it to say, that he was a counsel sought after as much for his forensic abilities as for his natural eloquence. If Mr. Mehta were less ease-loving he might have made a greater fortune than many others in his line. But his influence with officials secured for him an unfailing patronage by some of the Native States in Gujrat and Kathiawar who sought his advice not only as an advocate but as a shrewd guide and trusted friend. It is generally believed that Sir P. M. Mehta had been more than once offered a seat on the High Court Bench and that he as often refused it. Himself being almost dignity personified Sir Pherozeshaha might, in adorning the Bench, have lent it perhaps an extra shade of dignity of his own, but there is something almost incongruous in the very thought of Mr. Mehta donning the scarlet robes ; and it is as well that he kept one berth on the High Court Bench reserved for people who were more suited for it.

But if Sir Pherozeshaha's abilities or success as an advocate were such as might be found in persons even less illustrious than himself, he certainly possessed qualities as a popular advocate which must be characterised as simply the rarest. It is indeed interesting to speculate what rank

Mr. Mehta might have attained as a public leader without his leonine figure, his stentorian voice, his forceful eloquence and his dashing dialectics. Every one of these qualities taken singly is a great asset for a public leader, and a combination of all these is bound to make him irresistible. But we have no hesitation in saying that Sir Pherozeshaha's shrewd political sense and sensibility, his wide grasp of political principles and his statesmanship were in themselves so great that, even if bereft of the adventitious aid of the above named qualities of personality, he would still have made his mark as a political leader. Needless to say that the two together only made him one with many rivals but without a second. And that explains the services he rendered and the power he wielded not only in the Bombay Presidency but throughout the country during the last nearly forty years. The middle-aged men of to-day do not remember a time when Sir Pherozeshaha was not mentioned as already a senior leader in everything that related to political activity. A younger contemporary of the late Rao Sahib Mandlik, Mr. Mehta had the pleasure and the privilege of bringing the late Mr. Gokhale into prominence as an heir-apparent to his own Raj in Bombay. And even after Mr. Gokhale's death, though advanced in years he was looked upon as the sure strong-hold of principle and an active torch in the light-house of political wisdom by the entire moderate party.

Politics in India, under the present conditions of life, has an inevitably many-sided aspect. Consequently Mr. Mehta could neglect none of these aspects of public life, and his advocacy was needed and obtained equally whether in the Corporation, the University, the local or the Imperial Legislative Council. For over thirty-five years Mr. Mehta had been a member of the Bombay Corpora-

tion elected by the enlightened electorate of the Justices of the Peace. During that period he was thrice elected president of the Corporation; but a surer test of the faith kept in his wisdom and ability lay in the fact that he has been continuously returned by the Corporation as its chosen representative in Bombay Legislative Council since 1893, that is to say, when the privilege of election to the Legislative Councils was first given to the people. But in the Council he represented not only the Bombay Corporation but the whole range of non-official interests, and was throughout the period of his tenure the one acknowledged leader of the Opposition in the Council. His work in the Council was characterised not so much by a very close or elaborate study of details as a firm and unerring grasp of broad principles underlying any piece of legislation or any financial statement that came before the Council. For a number of years in the beginning the official members in the Council used to pretend that the presence of elected non-officials was at best a necessary evil or nuisance and under conditions of natural inequality which then obtained, they used to treat the latter with contempt and ridicule. To this Mr. Mehta not only gave a set-back in the nick of time, but rather turned the scales, and by his fearless and vigorous criticism and brilliant repartee, he installed himself as an object of terror and awe to the officials themselves. A number of instances are remembered and could be quoted in which Mr. Mehta dealt blow for blow with such force and good aim that the official members eventually learnt to fear and respect him, nay if possible, even to avoid his wrath and propitiate his good will.

The Bombay Corporation was Mr. Mehta's first love and he loved her to the day of his death with an affection and a constancy which was really very remarkable. For



no less than forty-six years he was a member of the Corporation and was nearly all the time the most trusted exponent of the civic affairs of the capital of the Presidency. His domination in the Corporation led to a revolt by people who were as tired of hearing him described as 'Mehta the powerful,' as the Athenians were of hearing Aristides called 'the Just.' But the revolt only emphasised his influence and strengthened his hold on that body. Like the Bombay Corporation the Bombay University Senate also was a favourite home of activity to Mr. Mehta. He was connected with the institution for forty years, and had a hand in moulding it from time to time. An advocate of general education Mr. Mehta was naturally opposed to the new-fangled schemes of specialisation; and in this respect his love for the good old ideals and methods consecrated by time had got the better of his judgment on the merits of the new schemes of the improvement of the courses of College studies and examinations.

Sir Pherozebhai was always so much engrossed with the Corporation and the University affairs that many people fancied he was not as mindful of the larger national interests as a man of his position should have been; and his silence on occasions and topics which required prompt pronouncements from leaders of the first magnitude often gave that fancy a colour of truth. But those who know him say that though ease-loving and indolent apparently, he was remarkably close in his touch and intimacy with public opinion and that he was a great reader of newspapers. Further, though apparently inaccessible to the many he never let a day pass without holding his own council in his chamber and manœuvring the leading strings connected with nearly every public movement of any importance. There can be no question that he was a leader among leaders; and though haughty, autocratic

and masterful to a degree, he always managed to temper those qualities with a skill and tactfulness which was peculiar to him. And it must be remembered to his credit that whatever he was, he was equally both to the Government and the people. 'Lick up and kick below' was never his maxim. He deported himself with the greatest dignity and self-respect even towards Governors and Viceroys, and his strength was felt as well by the Government as any one else. There was, therefore, no likelihood of his motives being misunderstood even when, if ever, he looked pro-government. The honours he won from Government were never attributed to his moderation but only to his strength. Such a leader a nation sees once perhaps in a century, and the Indian nation has particular cause to mourn his loss now that she is on the eve of a period pregnant with the most important political events.

(14 11-15)

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### M. G. Ranade

On Wednesday last, one of the greatest of Indians of the present century passed from real life into history. The nation was not prepared for the passing of Mr. Justice Ranade at this moment, especially because he had only recently taken leave and had entered upon a period of well-deserved, nay somewhat overdue, rest. Only a week ago the rumours of his ill health were authoritatively contradicted; and we were all rejoiced at the prospect of his soon recouping the vigour, both of his mind and body, and returning to the discharge of his multifarious duties even more actively than before. But death came with the swiftness of an eagle and snatched from the nation one of

the brightest of gems that ever bedecked its crown. Death has only in one more instance revealed how narrowly are life and eternity divided; but the event has created a gap in the nation which even philosophy cannot cover over. The one high beacon light which gave enlightenment to the whole country has been suddenly extinguished; and we feel dumbfounded in the enveloping darkness and sorrow.

It is difficult to estimate the loss inflicted on the nation by the death of that great man of omniscient learning, universal sympathies and purest patriotism. He was essentially a man of the nineteenth century, one whom even a century would find it a great difficulty to conceive in her overfertile womb. But Nature is after all more careful as to the excellence of the *types* she produces, and it is only reasonable, therefore, that "out of fifty seeds she often brings but *one* to bear." Such a single seed had Nature brought to bear in Mr. Ranade, and we know how richly it had fructified during the last thirty years. The end of every century would seem to be destined to cost India one of the greatest of her sons; and the loss of the illustrious Nana Fadanvis in the year 1800 can hardly have been different in *quality* from that of Rao Bahadur Ranade, not far from the end of 1900. Had Mr. Ranade lived in other and better times he would have been certainly an illustrious Prime Minister under Native rule; but though want of opportunities had made it impossible for him to win that sort of distinction, yet he had conclusively shown, even within his narrow sphere that he possessed some of those great qualities which enabled Nana Fadanvis to rule the Maharashtra with credit. Even under British rule he would have made an excellent Indian Finance Minister; nor is it too much to say that a seat in the higher ranks of the British Cabinet would have been quite within the

legitimate bounds of aspiration for a man of Mr. Ranade's stuff and abilities if he had been an Englishman. Mr. Ranade had inherited a rich patrimony of administrative ability from his ancestors and his father was for some time the Karbhari of the Kolhapur State.

Madhavrao was the second of a family of five children and his primary education was finished at Kolhapur. At the early age of 14 Mr. Ranade joined the Elphinstone College and there he won not only all the honours and prizes, but what is far more precious, the golden opinions of his European Professors. Among these were eminent scholars such as Prof. Harkness and Sir Alexander Grant. Though Mr. Ranade belonged to a second generation of educated men in Western India (the first being that of Messrs. Dadabhai Naoroji, Naoroji Furdunji, Dr. Bhaoo Daji, Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik and Shridhar Vithal Date), the Bombay University was yet to be founded when he entered on his College studies; and along with Dr. Bhandarkar and Messrs. Modak, Wagle and others, he appeared for some of the University examinations after he had really passed through those standards. From the Matric upto the LL. B. with Honours, Mr. Ranade stood first in all the examinations; and as there were no University endowments at the time, Mr. Ranade was given medals and prizes by the University at her own cost on account of the special recommendations of his examiners. Mr. Ranade was thus the first Graduate of the Bombay University; and curiously enough he turned out to be also the first in merits and ability in the whole abundant crop of graduates of three generations. The 'Prince of Graduates' is the title informally but unanimously conferred upon him; and though Mr. Ranade was superseded on three or four occasions in the matter of his appointment to the Vice-Chancellorship of the Bombay

University, yet in the eyes of the great educated Republic he was an ideal University man, clothed with all possible academical honours. The fact, that after passing his M. A. examination Mr. Ranade turned to Law, proves nothing as to his tastes. The LL.B. examination would give legal equipment to his intellect; and there is reason to believe that he had it not in his view to be a legal practitioner when he appeared for it. He had later on passed even the examination of the High Court Advocate; but his bent was all along towards Government service for which by temperament he was well suited.

It is to be noted, however, that the first and the most distinguished graduate did not think of leading the life of a mere scholar or an independent man of business. The Government were at the time of course in need of eminent educated men for administration, and Government service presented, in those early days, irresistible charms on account of the high emoluments, the elevated social status and dignity with which it was associated. Mr. Ranade, therefore, entered Government service; and most of it, to the end of of his life, was *judicial* service on account of his legal equipment. Yet, there are cherishable reminiscences left of his short career as a Professor in the Elphinstone College when his lectures, rich in thought and attractive in the manner of exposition, held the students spell-bound for the hour. As for his service in the Judicial department, it was in its beginning marked by a spirit of fearless independence; and the sensation, caused at one time by his conviction of a European offender from the Bench of the Bombay Presidency Magistrate's Court, few who know it can forget. Later on Mr. Ranade developed the eminent qualities of a painstaking Judge and a Judge who could rise above all technicalities of law when they might stand in the way of doing equitable and substantial justice. Even

in the Judicial service Mr. Ranade was systematically superseded on two or three occasions, and it is small credit to the Bombay Government that he was after all elevated to the Bench, when the Secretary of State would have none but a *native* at the post, and when the post was refused by one or two gentlemen to whom it was preferentially offered. It will thus be remembered that all the honours which Mr. Ranade got were not secured by pursuing a policy of studied moderation, or pandering to the officials, or being loud in their adulation, but were forced at the hands of Government *in spite* of their inclinations by sheer merit. They were not only unsought but commanded.

It is but an open secret that Mr. Ranade was, on more occasions than one, in bad graces with the Government. He was suspected of being undutiful as a Government servant in that he inspired public movements of various kinds; and he was actually once or twice transferred in the District as an unmistakable mark of Government disapprobation. But the solid basis of well-meaningness from which he worked, as well as the great ability which he displayed in his official duties, enabled him in the end to win back the confidence of Government and to raise his head above the cane with which Government were systematically "chopping off the tallest poppies" in the field of public spirit. And it is perhaps this aspect of Mr. Ranade's life as a public man that deserves the greatest appreciation and is also most instructive. For he has peculiarly succeeded in leading a *double* life in which he accomplished the very delicate task of serving the Government and the people at one and the same time in an effective manner. Mr. Ranade completely proved that a Government official is not a slave, bound hand and foot, but rather that what he has agreed to part with for his salary is only that portion of his mental capacity and energy

which is needed for an effective discharge of official duties. Government service is, in fact, not like the *sacrament* of wedded life in which it is unfaithful and a sin even to think of anybody but the spouse; it is only a *contract* with a strictly limited object and a well-defined measure of its performance.

Mr. Ranade proved that an official can, if he chooses, be fully public spirited without being a political agitator. The memorials that he drafted, the meetings that he inspired, the resolutions that he worded, the men that he trained and the institutions that he founded and reared,—what do all these things shew but that while serving his Government he could also serve his country, and that the two things are neither inherently nor practically so incompatible as some foolish people really believe, or certain interested people would have us believe? Who does not know that Mr. Ranade was not only one of the founders of the National Congress, but invariably used to avow his connection with it so far as an afternoon's attendance at the assembly at the right hand of the President would show it? Who does not know that the most famous political body of the Deccan, the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, was founded by him, and that he was the soul of it for a period of nearly twenty years? What more need an enthusiastic political agitator say than what has been said by Mr. Ranade in the pages of the Sabha's Quarterly Journal? And what more should a patriotic man aspire to do than what has been accomplished by Mr. Ranade by sowing the seeds of a rich political life in the Maharashtra by training a band of young hopefuls in a life of independence and usefulness, and by setting up in himself an object lesson in patient plodding and cheerful public work which must instruct and inspire generations born and unborn? While the whole country will remain grateful to him for his

work in connection with the Congress, for his masterly exposition and bold assertion of the doctrine of protection for India, for his learned essays on most of the economic questions of the day and for his work on the Finance Committee, the Bombay Presidency is indebted to him for his work in connection with the University; and the Maharashtra will be under obligations to him for his Maratha history, unfortunately yet incomplete but successful, even so far, in establishing the new and patriotic point of view of it.

But it is difficult to find terms to express the debt of gratitude which Poona owes to the illustrious deceased. Who can point out any important institution in Poona which was not more or less directly supported by Mr. Ranade, and the work of which was not carried on with his guidance or advice? Even the Shiwaji movement had its initial push at his hands! The Lawad Court, the Sarvajanic Sabha, the Spring Lecture Series, the Native General Library, the Hirabag Trust, the Industrial Conference, the Reay Art Exhibition and Museum, the Female Education Society, the old Dnyan-Prakash concern, the Gayan Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Elocution Gathering and the Deccan Club, and last but not the least Deccan Sabha,—all these exhibit patent marks of the advice and help which they received from Mr. Ranade at one or other stage of their existence and development. No doubt he had often the co-operation of such men as the late Mr. Vasudeo Ganesh *alias* Kaka Joshi, R. B. Krishnaji L. Nulkar, and S. H. Chiploonkar, but whether by right of seniority or by the force of his wisdom, it almost always fell to his lot to lead. Like the gold miner who values the smallest atom of dust for the still smaller grain of gold it may contain, like the designer of large machinery who knows the proper place and use of



screws and bolts and nails, even like Nature who knows the use of insects and vermin in the physical economy of the world, Mr. Ranade was all welcome and appreciation to any public worker of whatever degree of usefulness; and himself patient and unselfish to the utmost degree, he always knew how best to husband all possible power and resources at his command.

We make no pretence to ignore the fact that one particular party in Poona was known to identify him with itself. But so far as public work of a general kind was concerned Mr. Ranade, we know, was a man of no party. He hated schisms and was always available as a ready and zealous peace-maker. It is by such unselfish work, judicious leadership, and cheerful enthusiasm, that he worked in Poona, and made her great, useful and respected. It is Poona, therefore, that has cause to mourn his death most grievously. We are conscious that on account of certain matters he ceased latterly to have that exclusive hold on the mind of the public which he at one time undoubtedly possessed; and the public was sincerely sorry to find Mr. Ranade take up not over-defensible positions in the controversies relating to the Dadaji Rakhmabai case, the Age of Consent Bill and the great Sharada Sadan fraud. But apart from his legitimate right to hold his own views on social and religious matters, the public was always convinced that in whatever Mr. Ranade did he was guided by what he thought to be the best for the Society. In fact, it was impossible to be blind to the truth that though a thorough cosmopolitan at heart it pained him to be ever severed from the society and that he often cared more for the people than even for his principles which he was contented to see work out slowly and indirectly if that be necessary to have his harmony with the society undisturbed. It was on this account that though the flight of his

principles was daring, yet his actions were marked by a studious attempt to take the people along with him. Mr. Ranade has expressed these sentiments in a lucid manner in his inaugural address at the Social Conference in 1893. There he defined the work of the social reformer as follows:—"The reformer does not begin to write on a clear slate. His work is more often to complete the half written sentence. He has to produce out of the actual and by means of the actual; and he can reach his goal only by accepting as valid the acts which were noted in the past and by seeking to turn the stream with a gentle bend here and a gentle bend there, and not by damming it or forcing it into a new channel." In him the people have lost a guide, philosopher and friend.

It is impossible to recount all the various qualities which had made him great. In the first place, however, may be mentioned his keen and massive intellect, his clear understanding, his retentive memory, his wide grasp, his ready adaptability and admirable versatility of mind. But to these gifts of nature he added a rare kind of industry and perseverance which alone can make those qualities fructify as they had done in his case. For want of this industry how many of us have to be on our death-bed confronted with the "ghosts of our ideals"! And before the eyes of how many of us "dead youth" comes back with wringing hands and reproachful brows! It was far otherwise with Mr. Ranade who could have, we are sure, accounted for every hour of his pretty long life. He was a voracious reader and had an almost insatiable appetite for knowledge. But it was not books alone that he laid under contribution for this purpose. He was an appreciative reader of human nature as well; and no man who had ever come into contact with him was known to boast that he came away without being made to pay his tribute

to Mr Ranade's exacting curiosity and inquisitiveness. It was this trait in him that made him a dread to all sorts of idle gossipers and tale-tellers; and it was also this quality that made conversation with him a hard pastime. But Mr. Ranade was remarkably fair in his intellectual dealings. What he took from you by way of information and instruction he was sure to return to you hundred-fold by his luminous and suggestive talk.

As for his social qualities it goes without saying that he was not a brilliant man of society. He could not contribute to the "seductive pleasures" of a social gathering. He had somewhat of an insoluble mind; and though he could enjoy a laugh as well as any other in the company yet he neither attempted nor succeeded in raising it. He was thus deficient in social agreeableness; but he had, we know, only shared this defect with many another man of genius before him. It was in this respect that he always failed to make an impression upon Europeans among whom bright conversational powers count for much; and though he never sought intercourse with them beyond what may be absolutely necessary, yet it is possible that he may have on many occasions behaved towards them in such a manner as to seem cold, indifferent or proud. Any of these faults, however, were really far from him. But there is no doubt that with a smart private secretary he would have figured much better in all kinds of social functions and relations. Mr. Ranade, however, was a better speaker than a conversationist. He was no orator in any sense of the term; but he could speak fluently and was always remarkably to the point and rarely tedious. On occasions of uncommon importance, he could rise to oratorical heights which, however, were reached not by the aid of voice or gestures, but by silent inward inspiration which magnetised his words. Those who may have heard him when giving a reply to the

learned Missionary—Dr. Penttecost, in the Anandodbhava Theatre in Poona, or while delivering his inaugural address at the Social Conference at Poona in 1895 or while dealing hard blows to the Parsees for their opposition to the introduction of the Vernaculars in the University, or while eulogising Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji the other day on the occasion of unveiling his statue, will admit that Mr. Ranade's oratory and eloquence could not, as that of many other platform-speakers, be ordered like the tune of the paid piper whenever it was wanted, but it was unfailingly available whenever the dignity or the majesty of the occasion and sentiment demanded it.

Mr. Ranade cannot be called an author. He was rather a man of letters. He was gifted with a far more curiosity of knowledge and far more multiplied tastes, and had made a far more precious collection from books than any reader of his time. But, perhaps happily for the country, he was not an author who is usually restricted to particular subjects, 'whose tastes are tinged by their colouring, and whose mind is shaping itself by their form.' Mr. Ranade, on the other hand, like Lord Bacon, took all knowledge for his province, and he was actuated to authorship from time to time not by his inclinations and tastes but by the considerations of use and advantage to his country and to his people. This accounts for the great variety of subjects exhibited by the pamphlets and essays he wrote from time to time as the occasion demanded. It is possible, however, to sift the great mass of his writings and to make a beautiful collection of such as may possess a more abiding interest.

Such a compilation would be naturally preceded by an appreciative biography of Mr. Ranade; and we look to Professor Gokhale to take up the work and thus repay in a small measure the obligations on him of the gentleman at

whose feet it was Mr. Gokhale's cherished privilege to sit for many years as a pupil and a friend. Mr. Ranade's essays on questions of Indian economics, his memorandums on the subject of decentralization of Provincial Finance, his masterly reviews of the administrations of some of the Bombay Governors, the greater part of his inaugural addresses in connection with the several Social Conferences,—these, if coupled with a critical account of the myriad public movements in which he took a prominent part, and the relations and correspondence he maintained with eminent personages in the different provinces of India and foreign countries, would be one of the most profitable memorials of the illustrious genius that has just departed from us.

It is impossible to review in a brief compass Mr. Ranade's principles and opinions. Suffice it to say that he was a very advanced liberal in matters social, religious and political. He was an advocate of all-sided development and regarded the assistance of Government in all these matters as much necessary as the initiative by the people themselves. In social reform he always tried to start from a *Shastric* basis as far as possible, though his interpretation of the texts was often more convenient than natural. In matters religious he was a perfect theist, though he was somewhat misguided as to the precise form which, what he thought a purer worship, should take. But it was an object lesson to see the assiduity and perseverance with which he stuck to the Samaj movement and at the same time yielded to that reaction which naturally came in after years, when he enthusiastically turned back to look with a more appreciative eye upon the better side of Hindu idolatry and the teachings of the great saints inspired by it. As to his political opinions it would be superfluous to dilate upon them when

every one knows what the Congress means and knows also that Mr. Ranade was one of its founders and consistent supporters. On one occasion, however, Mr. Ranade had to write directly on the subject; and in the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Poona Congress which, it is well known, was written by Mr. Ranade, he has expressed the sentiments as follows "The meetings of this Congress represent the highest triumph of the influences that have been at work for fifty years and more; and it is for us to respond to this noble call in a way worthy of the place we occupy in the world's history." As regards the present condition of the country Mr. Ranade has been as emphatic about its being poverty-stricken as Mr. Dadabhai himself. In his note on 'Economic Reform' written some fifteen years ago he has expressed himself as follows.—"In spite of railways and canals, and in spite too of growing trade and extending agriculture, the country is getting day by day poorer in material wealth as weaker in productive capacity and energy....The growth of a foreign aristocracy of wealth in the country is to be deprecated on more grounds than one. It is not only an economic evil of the first magnitude but a source of grave political danger." And it may be generally said that Mr. Ranade entirely approved of all the items in the Congress propaganda.

As regards educational matters he held that "examinations are means to an end and not the end itself. The end is to have young men enjoying health and long life and desire to work out the problem of life with the advantage of general culture both of head and heart." Having such a high ideal before him it was natural that he was not satisfied with the present state of things in which, as observed by him in his paper read before the Bombay Graduates' Association in 1894, "the students exist for

the University and the University, it was thought, had not been created for the students and had no business to adapt itself to their needs and aptitudes." Mr. Ranade was always sympathetic towards the graduates and undergraduates of the Bombay University. He defended the former against unwarranted attacks by Dr. Bhandarkar, the Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1894 and boldly asserted that poverty and unsuitability of the College courses and the methods of University examinations were the principal causes of a premature end to so many brilliant careers among the graduates. As for undergraduates his enthusiastic advocacy of the system of examination by compartments and the introduction of the Vernaculars speak for themselves.

Such was the man, and such, therefore, is the country's loss. Geniuses like him are yet to be superfluous in India if they can be superfluous anywhere; and the loss has come when his need was the sorest. Great as are the things that Mr. Ranade already achieved, we expected still greater things from him after his retirement. But it has pleased God to call him away; and we should not complain lest it might look ungrateful of us to Him. Have we not in fact good reason to be satisfied with the span of three score years of life that was vouchsafed to Mr. Ranade, when we remember the many brilliant Indians who came so prematurely under the keen sickle of the great and grim Reaper, Death? We may, however, lay this unction to our heart that, as Emerson says, 'Nature never sends a great man into the planet, without confiding the secret to another soul.'

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## V. K. Chiplunkar

*Among the pioneers of thought and the masters of the Marathi language that the Deccan produced during the last fifty years, the late Mr. Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar occupies a very high rank. In fact, from him may be said to date the class of publicists, who had decided upon private and independent careers as the only sure condition of effective public work in the cause of the regeneration of their nation.*

Vishnu Shastri is perhaps one of those personalities about whom it is difficult to have anything like a perfect unanimity of opinion on all hands. And the reasons for this are to be found not so much in the elements that contributed to form his mental equation or character as in the manner as well as the matter of what he wrote for the public. A hot controversy had raged over his merits and his value while he was yet alive and working, and even now that he is gone these nearly twenty-five years, contemporary critics have not been able to divest their minds of prejudices and prepossessions so as to judge of him impartially. His critics have too frequently allowed either their literary tastes or their political opinions to interfere with the play of a dry light upon him. To attempt to be fair to him without being unfair to Truth need not, however, be regarded as impossible. First then, we will deal with him as a writer. It may be safely said that Vishnu Shastri was to the Marathi language what Milton and Macaulay were to the English language. Like the former he was the first great prose writer, and like the latter he was the most vigorous and popular critic and essay-writer in Marathi. All resemblance, however, between him and Milton ceases as soon as we have compared their services to their languages as pioneer prose writers.



Such is not the case with the other comparison; for, curiously enough Vishnu Shastri has innumerable and enduring points of resemblance with Macaulay. One can see at once that Macaulay must have been the favourite author of Vishnu Shastri, and all the merits and even all the demerits of the former's style are to be met with in the latter's writings. Among Vishnu Shastri's merits as a writer may be mentioned a good choice of classical and dignified words, and phrases and quotations, wealth of reference and allusion, genius for narration, subtlety of reasoning, charm of illustration, vigour of expression, and the presentment of fresh points of view. Irony and sarcasm were conspicuous among the figures of speech that abounded in his style, and with a soul steeped deep in the historical, poetic and classical literature, when Vishnu Shastri wrote his best he produced a piece of composition which was sonorous and rhythmic, altogether pleasing and at the same time elevating to the sense and the spirit. On the other hand, his writings lack precision and balance, both of which are always the outcome of an exclusively meditative and philosophical mind. There was, however, sometimes an unmistakable bid for the glitter and pomp of style, and to a certain extent one could say of Vishnu Shastri's style what John Morley has said of Macaulay's. His periods were sometimes more dashing than becoming, his accentuation at times too jarring, the emphasis too stamping and the phrases too barbed. There was at times an exaggeration of expression and an 'unlovely staccato in voice.' "The wine of truth is in his cup a brandied draught a hundred degrees above proof and he too often relenishes the lamp of knowledge with naphtha instead of fine oil. He seeks truth, not as she should be sought, devoutly, tentatively and with the air of one touching the hem

of a sacred garment but clutching her by the hair of the head and dragging her after him in a kind of boisterous triumph, a prisoner of war and not a goddess." We must remember, however, that Vishnu Shastri never professed to write as a philosopher, and had also far more justification than Macaulay for writing a style that might err not on the side of insipidity but on the side of vigour. For while Macaulay came on the tide of national glory and prosperity, Vishnu Shastri saw nothing but misery and gloom all around him in the nation. He was inspired with a mission to arouse his countrymen to self-confidence and to an appreciation of the best elements and the potentialities of their race.

And it is undoubtedly his harshness of language that is the real cause of most of the prejudice in so many quarters against Vishnu Shastri. There were few prominent men of his time who escaped unscathed from his pen. We have already noticed his severe handling of the late Mr. Kunte; and among the others that have been criticised by him, though less severely, are the late Mr. Justice Ranade, the late Sardar Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, and the late Dayanand Saraswati. But the impartiality of his mind in this connection can be proved by the fact that in his essay on Moropant, Vishnu Shastri has not spared even his own father in the latter's capacity of a critic of the poet. Now in extenuation, if not entire justification, of the harshness of Vishnu Shastri's language, it may be said that generally a writer who feels strongly will necessarily write strongly, and the writer of the *Nibandha-Mala* was a man of exceptionally strong feelings. Disgust is the only word with which one can describe his feeling about the spirit of drift and indifference, and what was worse, a spirit of blind admiration for everything foreign, that characterised the men of his generation. There were also other things. The Christian

Missionary, who had successfully nestled into the mind of the educated people by an attractive exhibition of some of the best features of the Western civilisation such as the love of learning, the spirit of educational enterprise and the methods of democratic usefulness, had become in the early days of English education almost an oracle. And using his position of influence to the fullest advantage he had made devastating inroads upon the field of even the best among the Hindu traditions. Vishnu Shastri was by no means the first in his age to perceive the impending calamity; for, as we have already noticed, his own father and the first Pundit of his time, Krishna Shastri, had not only been alive to the new danger but had made active efforts to avert it by starting, with the co-operation of several other writers a magazine specially directed against the harmful side of the Missionary teaching. It is natural that in the first decade of the twentieth century, when the over-whelming tide of the Missionary has been so successfully beaten back that hardly a vestige of his domination now remains, we should not be able to thoroughly appreciate or realise the evils of the situation. But even today we have amidst us enough of the evil to judge by sample the vast proportions which it had assumed forty years ago. Krishna Shastri and his colleagues, however, did not make a permanent impression by their anti-missionary crusade; for, their early enthusiasm was soon damped by what might be regarded as the showers of official favour. They also lacked the emotional fervour which Vishnu Shastri possessed. It was, therefore, reserved for him to deal a death-blow to the missionary influence on the mind of his generation, and a task like that can scarcely be accomplished by a milk-and-water criticism. Vishnu Shastri was a pioneer of new ideas and ideals moulded in a genuinely *Swadeshi* mould; and the prejudice against him

has been only proportional to the shock which his writings gave to the vested interests, intellectual and otherwise, of his age. The battle for the cause of patriotism is always one without fear of reaction by a flank movement. A real patriot should always make it a rule to speak as little of 'patriotism' as possible. He should be the last to utter the word patriotism, secure in the belief that his own *action* and the *action* of persons like himself will do the needful. But this rule applies only to an advanced state of patriotic feeling in the country, when the nation has acquired the warmth and glow by action in actual fight. It is otherwise when the initial spade-work has to be done and patriotism itself is to be directly preached as a specific stimulant against national torpor. In Vishnu Shastri's opinion, the country was being ruined by placid and misguided meditation over the brilliant features of the foreign civilization and by its drifting away from the moorings which alone might save it from being involved in the rapids of disintegration. *He wanted the nation to know itself and its past glories so that it may not have insolence or self-sufficiency but only confidence in its own strength and capacity to adapt itself wisely and well to the new surroundings without losing its individuality.* And for this he saw no remedy so patent as to use the honest language of the heart, not caring whether it was sufficiently mild or adulterated with the balmy commonplaces of qualification.

Vishnu Shastri may have been a bigot, but he was an enlightened bigot. It is a mistake to suppose that his mind was one chaotic mass of prejudice and irreverence. On the contrary we find that it was highly susceptible to greatness and worth, and his writings contain abundant proofs that though he might seem to be an iconoclast yet he was not incapable of worship. His criticism of men like Mr. Ranade was not exclusive of his admiration

for them when taken all in all. To give only one instance, we may point out that in a letter, dated 5th April 1879, he writes to a friend as follows:- "Indeed in my estimation a Rao Bahadur knocked down successfully is an infinitely more creditable game than all Dayanandas and Jotibas put together. If my tone is more respectful towards the Rao Bahadur (M. G. Ranade) than towards the great (I) author of *गुडामार्ग* (one Jotiba Fule) that is due to the unspeakable difference between the *first man of the age* and the poorest scribbler with just the clothing of humanity on him." Then, again, it is generally supposed that Vishnu Shastri was hopelessly prejudiced against everything English. Nothing could be farther from truth than this. His *Nitaradha-Mala* is full of generous acknowledgments of all that is best in the Western civilisation and particularly the English literature. An appreciative student of English poetry, classics and history could not do otherwise. His criticism was directed only against those superficial English students of Indian literature, and those false and perverse-minded English interpreters of Indian history and Indian life, who abounded in the early days of the contact between India and England. In the introduction to his *कावेयचक्र* (an essay on the five great poets in the Sanskrit language), he has openly admitted that it would be impossible to repay the obligations on the entire *Bharat-nishu* of those among the inquisitive, appreciative, generous-minded English admirers of learning and literature who helped not only to conserve the interest in research in the Sanskrit language, but actually glorified the name of the Hindus as the possessors of a splendid literature throughout the West. 'It was,' he says, 'these men who really taught the Hindus to care for and study their own Sanskrit literature; it was they who taught us to recognise the jewels, that we were wearing on our body, as jewels, and

to value them as such.' He has also acknowledged the superiority of some of the English poets, and has deplored the want of a historic sense generally among the class of Sanskrit writers (*vide* कविपेचक, P. 133).

If Vishnu Shastri's writings went beyond the avoidance of false moderation of language his faults were to a great extent accounted for by his own high purpose and his surroundings. Even his own critics admitted that beyond the harshness of his language not much fault was to be found with his teachings. On the other hand, his services to the cause of the Marathi literature are priceless. His *Nibandha-Mala* is a library in itself. It is a rich treasure of the productions of a literary artist of the first water. His essays have as much literary flavour and finish as historical and political wisdom. A dignified humorist and a cautious wit, he has embellished his writings with many a *bon mot*, that is oft quoted but does not lose in repetition. Next to the *Mala* may be ranked his critical essays on the Sanskrit poets. These were written when he was just fresh from the college, and though his criticism is sometimes at fault and his research not sufficiently exhaustive, still he shows in these essays his excellent poetic taste and his delight in the sweet and sonorous measures of the Sanskrit masters of poesy. His writings on Marathi grammar next claim our attention, and of these it may be said with justice that they evince a critical study of the subject. It appears from one of his miscellaneous writings that he had formed a regular scheme for writing essays on also the Marathi poets, whom he held in very high esteem. But unfortunately the scheme was not carried out, though judging by his essay on Moropant in the *Nibandha-Mala*, we have very good reason to suppose that the performance would have been a very creditable one.

So much for his writings. But Vishnu Shastri's personality remains to the younger generations as much a source of inspiration as his writings. It is said that "the influence of an author becomes in time something apart from his books; a certain generalised or abstract personality impresses itself on our minds long after we have forgotten the details of his opinions, the argument by which he enforced them and, even what are usually last to escape us the images by which he illustrated them. Phrases and sentences are a mask, but we detect the features of the man behind the mask." Now, as for Vishnu Shastri, 'this man behind the mask' would have been discovered to be a silently meditative, self-contained, firm, and determined individual, who alway kept around him an atmosphere of literary culture, and who was absorbed in the unconscious setting up of a new idea, for those among the generations to follow, who might be anxious to do some public good, some national service. His deliberate and courageous kicking up of the shackles of Government service, his foundation of an independent school of national education, with its organs the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta*, his journal the *Kavyethas-Sangraha*, devoted to history and poetry, his lithographic press and his series of historical pictures and the *Kitabhkhana* or booksellers' and publishers' shop, all these were the first of their kind and the harbingers of a new life that was to dawn in the Deccan. These undertakings shine brilliantly on the background of self-sacrifice and have deservedly earned for Vishnu Shastri the name and the honour of the father of the new generation in the Deccan. It is a profitless speculation what Vishnu Shastri would have done, were he alive to-day. But what he actually did in the brief span of 32 years of life that were given to him, is enough to procure for him a full release from the obligation under which

was indeed only a first step to the founding of a press and a newspaper. But even here the spirit of self-sacrifice, which actuated him to give up law, was the dominating feature of the enterprise. Till 1891 he did not take a single rupee from the press concern for his contributions to the newspapers, the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta*. In 1891 he purchased the papers as a proprietary concern, but only burdened with a debt of seven thousand rupees, which took seven years more to liquidate, and in the meanwhile he maintained himself on a law class. It was only since 1899 that he could maintain himself with ease on the profits of the *Kesari*. But he always spent very largely on public business from these; in fact the cash-box of the *Kesari* was the main financial reserve for many a movement in the Maharashtra and elsewhere. He always obliged the rich as well as the poor by writing petitions and memorials for them without charging a single pie. And during forty years he wrote so many petitions that the emoluments earned from them would have amounted to a fortune. The scholarly books which he wrote did not, with the exception of the *Gita Rahasya*, bring him anything, and, by an irony of fortune, most of the profits of edition after edition of that famous philosophical work were spent to cover a deficit in the *Kesari* owing to the high prices of printing paper during the years of the war.

Steadfastness of friendship was another of his prominent virtues. The celebrated Adoption Case, which arose out of his trusteeship, accepted out of a mere duty to a friend on death-bed, cost him far more time and money on the whole than his imprisonment and prosecutions. The proceedings lasted off and on from 1901 to the end of his life. His latest triumph over his powerful litigant enemies was won in the Bombay High Court only one week before his death. Throughout this period he spent out of



his own pocket over thirty-five thousand rupees of which not a single pie has yet been recovered. It would, I think, be difficult to find in all the annals of our public men an example of this nature. The adopted boy is indeed a monument of good fortune, in that he got a man like Lok. Tilak as his patron and next friend.

The moral purity of Lok. Tilak's private life was another of his outstanding virtues. He was absolutely free from any unethical taint, and it was only because he had such a spotless character that he could always hold his head erect and his face unabashed amidst his enemies mercilessly, but it was not sufficiently recognised that he could do so mainly because he was not living in a glass-house himself. Would his enemies or Government have ever spared him if they could have found a single flaw in his character ? The purity of private life was his unassailable stronghold.

As regards intellect it is admitted on all hands that for acuteness and subtlety he had few equals in the length and breadth of the country. There were many who could display deeper depths of knowledge, wider expanses of sympathy, *greater variety of tastes*, and could diffuse much finer or sweeter aroma of culture around them. But in point of sheer intellectual acuteness and resourcefulness few could beat Lok. Tilak. With a wonderful instinct he always scored a bull's eye in argument, and hit the nail right on the head of the crux in any controversy. And the versatility of his intellect was even as great as his acuteness. He was equally at ease in discussing matters of controversy whether the question was one relating to the ethics of the Gita or the adaptation of the key-board on the English Linotype to the Marathi composing system; the fixing of the birth-date of Shivaji or the most proper method of Marathi orthography ; the revision by astrono-

mical adjustments of the Hindu calendar or the latest development in the appliances of hand-spinning of yarn ; the interpretation of an archaic vedic text or an obscure clause of the Police Act. In fact, like Bacon, he could claim all departments of knowledge as his province ; and with short notice he could arm himself well enough to give battle to the expert in any field. It is really doubtful which he loved more, politics or scholarship, though he actually devoted more time to the former.

As a writer he was extremely pointed and pithy. He was sternly logical, scornful of ornamentation, forceful and blunt, and mercilessly aggressive, and never gave quarter to the enemy. As a speaker also he commanded attention. Never a master of the subtle graces of the art of eloquence, his strength lay in the subject matter and argument. And on occasions his vehemence swept the field like a wild hurricane or slashing sleet. Always true to his own ground, he took the audience off its feet, and invariably remained conqueror of the situation.

But all these qualities, individually or in the aggregate, could not have made Tilak what he was viz. the idol of the people and the Man of the Century. Lok. Tilak's unparalleled popularity could not be adequately accounted for by his high education, his urbane culture, his keen intellect, his learned scholarship, his versatile genius, his journalistic enterprise, his powerful eloquence, his purity of character, his steadfastness of friendship, his magnetic personality, his material selflessness or even his towering patriotism. Some of these eminent qualities he shared with this or that leader in this or that province of India, or in his own province for the matter of that. All these qualities together no doubt made him great, but what made him a hero among his people is something else. Heroism is described as a military attitude of the soul

towards external evil, and the stout affirmation of one's ability to cope single-handed with an infinite army of enemies. This attitude characterised Lok Tilak throughout his life; and the particular form of external evil that he chose to fight against was the political domination of his country by foreigners. It is no use mincing matters here, and I for one am prepared to accept the choice epithets showered on him by Government and its minions as *only tributes of praise in disguise to Lok. Tilak*. Sir Valentine Chirol rendered a signal service to Lok. Tilak by describing him as the 'Father of Indian Unrest,' and I am quite sure that Tilak would not have sued Sir Valentine if the latter had stopped at that, and not vilified him by reflections upon his private character. 'The Father of Indian Unrest indeed!' A simpler and yet a pithier description of such a patriot as Tilak was, can hardly be imagined. The rousing of a sense of self-respect in the Indian people, the creation of a hope of a bright future before them, the assertion of their full natural rights as a nation, and the infusion of a spirit of proud and even reckless defiance of anything that may stand in the way of all this—that was the main theme of all his idealism and realism. This theme he held in a relentless grip throughout his life, and like a consummate general concentrated all his powers and energies in life upon that single objective. That is why Government hated him, that is why those who differed from him disliked him, and that is also why the people in every part of the country loved him. In him they knew they ever had a stout and a faithful champion.

Heroism like this naturally took time to receive its recognition. But it came at last. Says Emerson :—"Heroism works in contradiction to the voice of mankind and in contradiction for a time to the voice of the great and good.

Heroism is an obedience to a secret impulse of an individual's character. Now to no other man can its wisdom appear as it does to him. Therefore just and wise men take umbrage at his acts until after little time be past they see it in unison with their acts. All prudent men see that the action is clean contrary to a sensual prosperity; for every heroic act measures itself by its contempt of some external good. *But it finds its own success at last, and then the prudent also extol.* "

And so it was also with the heroism of Lok. Tilak !

(9-8-1920)

### Lok. Tilak as a Scholar

The dictum of Carlyle that "A hero at one point is a hero at all points" cannot certainly be accepted as wholly true, but there is no doubt that after subtracting the Carlylese from the aphorism there remains a substratum of truth which unquestionably has an actual or potential existence and foundation in fact. Very often the divine afflatus of heroism is the same and all depends upon the field of work one chooses of his own accord or inevitably is flung into. The scholarly spark, however, is so irrepressible and expansive that, even though its full glare might continue to illuminate only one chosen sphere, it cannot fail to shed its fitful lustre in other temples whenever opportunity offers itself at least through the lattices of their windows or fissures in the walls. To take the most recent instances from Great Britain alone, Gladstone, though a large portion of his energy was absorbed by politics, did devote some time to scholarly pursuits and made a mark, not surely as deep as in politics, but none the less noticeable: Morley as the Secretary of State for Ireland or India may be easily forgotten, but his name as

an erudite litterateur, a profound thinker and a master of English prose is sure to be enshrined permanently in the memory of men. More names in illustration can be given, but only a couple suffice for our purpose.

Tilak's mother-country was not so fortunately placed as Great Britain was in the times of Gladstone and Morley and is in those of Lords Asquith and Balfour. A remarkable feature of such independent countries like Great Britain is that in them their politics are not so exacting and drastic, nor so omnivorous, as the politics of subject nations like India. In the former case politics and letters may be said to run closely parallel to each other as a canal and a railway line beside it do, both advancing with equal pace; while in the case of the latter, letters more often than not are swept away in the ever-swelling torrent of politics and it is very rarely that they succeed in tearing themselves away from the all-absorbing grip. Suffer as Tilak had to, under these unavoidable disadvantages inseparably accompanying the politics of a dependent country, Tilak as a scholar shines with as much brilliance as a politician and it has to be acknowledged that his Vedic learning and researches affected thought to the same extent as Gladstone's classical scholarship did and that his philosophy of the Gita as propounded in his monumental Gita-Rahasya supplied a practical point to the theories in political, social and moral philosophy.

Lok, Tilak was born with the literary or scholarly spoon in his mouth, as it were. His father himself was a Shastri of some repute and all his youthful learning was acquired after the manner of Pandits. In his school and college days Sanskrit and Mathematics were subjects which he treated as his own and in both his intellectual acumen was so piercing and masterlike that even his teachers and professors at times were stricken with

wonder and awe at his untutored genius. He began life in a field which could give amplest scope to his scholarly pursuits and habits and though afterwards perverse Fate forced him to forsake that favourite field, to the last day of his life he remained a politics-scratched but a full-blown scholar. How unconquerable was his love of learning was proved by the fact borne out by himself, that he would like to be a professor of mathematics if his country were free. To satisfy this unquenchable thirst Tilak maintained a large library of which he was jealous almost like a lover and whatever moments he could steal from the storm and stress of his strenuous political agitation he used to spend in his beloved library as though conversing with the 'mighty minds of old.'

But the magnificent and varied collections of books in his possession are not the sole index to his Octopus-like genius and versatile scholarship. Such was the plasticity of his parts, the acuteness of his intellectual insight and breadth of his general mental culture that he had become what may be called a non-expert referee in matters of all erudite disputes and critical controversies. Whether it was a question of historical research, astrological investigation, astrological discussion, theological disputation or even legal decision he had always something new and original to say, which when it did not satisfactorily set the point at issue at rest, threw a flash of search-light over it, lighting up its dark corners and thus facilitating its solution. Specialists in particular branches of human knowledge many a time approached him, some honestly to applaud the width of his talents, others to superciliously defeat him, but all to consult him and have the delight of a learned talk with him. None of them ever went away unsatisfied, the praisers with reverential awe and the condemners with biting repentance.

That Tilak had an insight in type-foundry and press-machinery, the *Kesari* press founded by him will prove; that he had the instinct of an historical researcher his record-find of the Jedhe chronology fully demonstrates; that he had a learning towards the so-called abstruse sciences his reformed Hindu Calendar shows; that he wielded the pen of a flaming and powerful Marathi prose-writer, his articles in the *Kesari* point out. But the only three triumphant pillars of his various genius and scholarship will ever be his 'Arctic Home in the Vedas', his 'Orion' and his 'Gita-Rahasya.' It will also be his triple literary crown of the greatest effulgence. Though there are a few squeamish critics who find fault with him for writing the first two books in English, they establish him as a scholar of practically international renown and the profundity of his achievements was worthily appreciated by foreign scholars. In writing these books in a language other than his own mother-tongue, one of his patriotic motives was to show and affirm the superiority of India as a nation in departments which foreigners had come to believe as monopolised by them. As this pair of books published Tilak's scholarship beyond Maharashtra and beyond India, so his tremendous Gita-Rahasya, first issued in Marathi, registered an epoch in Marathi literature and language. Here I should incidentally mention that his two English books were long out of print, but now they are being made available to people and even the Marathi Gita-Rahasya is, I am told, being Englished.

It goes without saying that the new impressions of the two English books and the appearance of the third with an English garb, not to speak of the translations of the last in the many Indian dialects, will carve for him a permanent niche in the republic of letters along with the best of them. Even those who are very remotely familiar with Tilak's life-

story will easily recall that his lucubrations of such glorious repute were the results of the enforced leisure which severe politics incurred for him and thinking in that strain one begins to wish that he should have been granted a long, long holiday from his pervasive politics. Such is the character of the works and the circumstances which brought them forth that instead of our mind being proudly satisfied with what splendid output India had had from him, our thoughts go to reckon what the world, and India with it, has lost on account of Tilak's endowments being, from the literary point of view, wasted over politics. And it is not without a curse on the irony of the politics of a subject nation that one can sum up his vastly promising scholarly career as a lapse from letters to politics—from glorious letters to grinding politics. The only consolation to us is that in both his designs were lofty and as the poet has said: Lofty designs must close in like effects. Let us, therefore,

"Loftily lying,

Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,

Living and dying."

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### G. V. Joshi

It is our calamitous misfortune to have to announce this week the death of Hon. Rao Bahadur Ganesh Vyenka-tesh Joshi, an elected Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. Mr. Joshi was for some years past affected by hernia, it had become a chronic ailment with him. Last week it grew very serious and a surgical operation was advised. The operation was successfully performed by four eminent doctors of the City, last Tuesday. Mr. Joshi



seemed to recover from the after-effects of the operation; but all of a sudden *his strength failed him* and he passed away at about 10 a. m., yesterday. He was unruffled and preserved the usual calmness and serenity even in death. Numbers of those who attended the funeral on the banks of the Mutha river, thought that they saw, as it were, the usual face of Mr. Joshi, but alas, the life was gone out of it. The soul that enlightened it had departed from its mortal coils, leaving his relatives and his countrymen to mourn the loss of so precious a life.

Mr. Joshi was born in 1849 at Miraj. He was educated at Kolhapur and completed his collegiate career in the Elphinstone College by becoming a graduate in Arts. Some time afterwards he entered Government service in the Educational Department, and rose sheerly by his eminence as a teacher to high position. He was for some time acting Head Master of the Poona High School. As a teacher and as a Head Master he left an indelible impression upon his colleagues and pupils. He was a living *store of information on various subjects*, and his proficiency as a teacher may be gauged from the fact recorded by many of his students that he made so dry a subject as Geography as interesting as lessons in the most emotional and appealing poetry. He was a rigid and strict disciplinarian, yet withal he won for himself the love as well as the respect of the pupils that came under him.

To the public at large, especially in the Maharashtra, much interest attaches to Mr. Joshi's activities as a politician and a publicist rather than a school-master. It is true that only after his retirement from Government service could Mr. Joshi take active part in public life. But even during his official career he accumulated immense interest in public questions by his *minute and detailed studies*. From the early years of his life Mr. Joshi had a

charm for facts and figures and in later years possessed the fully developed statistical instinct. He carefully studied the several public and administrative questions as they cropped up in all their aspects. He had made a special study of the Land Revenue questions and those who have read the long letters on revenue questions that appeared in the *Times of India*, studded with facts and figures and initialled 'G. V. J.' will have marked the remarkable grip with which he manipulated and mastered the subject. If he was a specialist on the Land Revenue questions, he was no less an adept in the various other departments of administration. His chief feature was the great delight that he felt in statistics. In his "New Spirit in India" Mr. Nevinson wrote of Mr. Joshi that "from his mouth statistics flowed like water from a fountain." He thus describes his study-room :—"On book-shelves round the walls, and heaped upon the floor and tables were hundreds of volumes and pamphlets crammed with figures. It seemed as if the owner had collected every book and essay ever written upon the economics of India, and year by year had filtered them into his mind. He had the instinct for averages which I take to be the economist's instinct. He thought of women and children in terms of addition ; he saw men as columns walking. He watched the rising and falling curves of revenue, expenditure and population as others watch the curves of beauty. Any line of figures was welcome to his spirit, and though he had made his living by teaching little Indians to read 'Robinson Crusoe,' his chief study seemed to be in the scripture called the 'Statistical Abstract relating to British India.' Upon this careful piece of literature he meditated day and night ; or if his mind required a change he relaxed it on theology." Statistics were to Mr. Joshi as pleasing as a poem. 'He felt' says Mr. Nevinson, 'a splendour and æsthetic satisfaction

in meditating on the large figures possessing epic grandeur, like those of the population of India. The passage in the Statistical Abstract headed 'Finance' he enjoyed with the most delicate appreciation of style." Endowed with such a love for statistics, a retentive memory and austere habits of study, Mr. Joshi could handle almost every problem of administration in India with the ease and intelligence of a trained master.

From his early days as a school-master Mr. Joshi was known amongst his friends and associates as a close student of politics. For a long period he was the right-hand man of the late Mr. Justice Ranade. It was he who used to supply the statistical figures which illuminated some of the writings and speeches of Mr. Ranade. Mr. Joshi also contributed a number of articles to the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha which in its style was deservedly famous. Mr. Joshi had no little hand in preparing the Minutes of evidence submitted by some of the Indian witnesses to the Welby Commission of 1897. Whenever any public question was in the forefront, be it a question of economics or politics, of administration or deliberation, Mr. Joshi's statistics were almost invariably in evidence in the conclaves, behind the curtain, of the leaders discussing it. If partizanship or equal status in life is often the joining link between leaders, in Mr. Joshi's case it was pre-eminently his acknowledged mastery of statistics and close study of economic questions that connected Mr. Joshi with the leading publicists on this side of India, and that secured for him ready admission into their conferences and meetings. His reputation as a sound statistician and economist even attracted the attention of the Government of Bombay. And Mr. Joshi was selected to work on the Financial Committee appointed to deliberate over the budget pre-

sented in the last two sessions of the reformed Bombay Council. Mr. Joshi's work in the Committee drew forth warm applause from the Government. Even during the short period of his career as a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, Mr. Joshi had earned the respect and admiration of his official colleagues. In the last session of the Council he moved resolutions on questions affecting the advance of education, and proved himself to be a very staunch and plucky debator. Armed as he was by a fund of accurate information and up-to-date statistics, Mr. Joshi, possessing in a large measure the tenacity of a debater, could very easily get the better of his opponent. In the course of his debate, he took the last sessions of the Council by surprise by his frequent excursions into the various heads of administration in which he seemed to be thoroughly at home. There is every reason to believe that had he been spared a few years more, he would have left a lasting impression in the Bombay Council.

Although outside the Congress, Mr. Joshi took great interest in its annual proceedings. It was after the regrettable Surat-split that he began to take an active part in the Congress movement. He held that the active Calcutta Congress of 1906 presided over by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji marked an important stage in the constitutional struggle for political reform in India, as it gave a definite form and shape to the ideals and aspirations of the people, and laid down in its four well-known resolutions a programme of constitutional work based on self-help and self-reliance. He was thoroughly of opinion that for true progress a programme of work based on the principle of self-help was necessary. After the Surat-split Mr. Joshi who till then had been an outside spectator, joined the ranks of the Nationalists. He joined the Nationalists because it was his firm faith and conviction that the

Nationalist programme was a thoroughly constitutional programme based on the four Calcutta resolutions, because it was a programme which abhorred even the faintest idea of a resort to methods of violence, because it was a programme based on the principle of self-help which alone could ensure real progress. He regretted that the 'wild vapourings of a few visionaries' were taken by Government as the expressions of the new thoughts and aspirations of the people, and were used up as a handle for enforcing repressive measures. He very strongly resented the use of the term "extremists" as applied indiscriminately by the officials to the Nationalists. Mr. Joshi presided for the last few years over the annual Ganapati and Shivaji festivals celebrated in Poona. He presided over the Poona District Conference and the Provincial Conference held at Dhulia in 1908. In his presidential address at Dhulia he explained that the Nationalist demand for Swaraj was no other "than a demand for a system of responsible government on the Colonial model." His ideas of practical improvements in the administration of the country are embodied in the excellent minute presented by him to the Decentralization Commission. Recently in the halls of the Sarvajanika Sabha he delivered a series of informing and valuable lectures in Marathi on the various forms of constitutional government obtaining in the self-governing colonies of the British Empire, and on their history. Though he did not attend the Conventionist Congress at Madras, Lahore and Allahabad, he was ever ready to make a compromise, and he spared no efforts for the same. It was his firm conviction that Swaraj was the only means to India's progress. He thus emphasized the point in his presidential address at Dhulia :— "It is a fight—a constitutional fight—for a free constitution such as has been conceded to the self-govern-

ing colonies of the British Empire and which has so largely helped to build their greatness, their strength and their prosperity. The autocratic system of government is essentially wrong and faulty and tends to keep us low in the scale of other nations, stunting our growth and impeding our national development. At all events it is a system which can never initiate, much less facilitate, the transition of a nation to a higher plane of life, civilisation and material well-being which is the only moral justification of the British rule in India. We ask that the system of autocratic rule be replaced by a popular sentiment that is existing in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa. All experience testifies and all history teaches, and as John Stuart Mill points out, the representative government of one people by another has no meaning and no reality. And we are convinced that it is only under some scheme of Swaraj or responsible government that we can hope to make progress and rise to the full moral height of which we are capable. Under no other system, however skilfully planned, can we hope to rise in the scale of nations and in the fitness of things recover the proud position that once was ours in the forefront of the world's advance." In Mr. Joshi it is not only the Deccan but the whole of India that suffers an irreparable loss and the country's grief over his death must be unconsolable.

( 13-1913 )

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### G. K. Gokhale

There is hardly any prominent fact about Mr. Gokhale's life and career that is not now well-known to our readers. Born in 1866 of poor parents Mr. Gokhale took his degree in 1884 and was immediately admitted to the member-

ship of the Deccan Education Society. As a College Professor he soon made his mark and displayed a rare versatility, in as much as he could handle with equal competency any subject whether it was Mathematics, English Literature, History or Political Economy. Being a junior he could never come into the Principalship of the Fergusson College; but behind the Principal Mr. Gokhale was the main tower of strength, prestige and public confidence. But he soon became attracted to higher public work, and as a disciple of the late Mr. Ranade he threw himself into it with such energy and devotion that his duties as a College Professor were soon put into the background in public estimation. Joining in the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha he soon became its Secretary and the editor of the Sabha's journal. He was also a joint-editor of the *Sudhakar* along with his colleague Prof. Agarkar, and made a name as a brilliant writer of the English language. Of course he now joined the Congress and was at once recognised to be one of its rising young men. As Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Conference and as Secretary of the Poona Sessions of the National Congress, he gave ample proof of his capacity as a practical worker. In 1903 he was appointed joint general Secretary of the Indian National Congress, and in 1905, as President of the Benares Sessions of the Congress he nearly figured as the popular counterpart of Lord Curzon in political ability; for it was at Benares from his chair as President that Mr. Gokhale subjected Lord Curzon to criticism the like of which his Lordship had perhaps never seen or remembered.

In 1897 he was chosen by Mr. Ranade to proceed to England as a witness before the Welby Commission, and it is from this year that Mr. Gokhale became an all-India rather than a provincial asset. In the year 1900 he was elected to the Bombay Legislative Council, but he practi-

cally treated the Bombay Council as only a stepping stone to the Vice-regal Legislative Council; and there he has been continuously from the year 1902 to the day of his death—a period of more than twelve years. And during all this time, the whole of India can acclaim with a single voice that Mr. Gokhale has proved himself the one leader of the entire non-official party in the Council and a singularly able critic and debator upon matters of administration. Even outside the Council there were other fields of work for him, and Mr. Gokhale was a member of a number of committees or commissions appointed by Government. Moreover he had from time to time on his hands self-imposed work of an arduous nature. He went to England three or four times as a popular envoy and the leader of Congress deputations. The number of meetings he addressed in England may perhaps be as large as that of the meetings he addressed in India. The work of raising the memorial to his Guru he took up purely as a self-imposed labour of love and the Ranade Economic Institute is the result. Impressed with the necessity of taking up the cause of the Indians in South Africa he made a tour in that country, raised in India a phenomenal agitation and collected what may be regarded as fabulous funds. The institution of the Servants of India Society was brought into being as soon as he left the College. That institution has since been his home; and he meant to develop and ramify it so as to cover the whole of the country with young men pledged to work for the common weal. But he was called away unexpectedly; and the large list of his unfinished business must certainly add point to our grief over his death, even if we look upon it only as selfish men who wanted to take all the service that we could get out of him.

The chart of Mr. Gokhale's public life, which we have briefly and hurriedly sketched above, will be enough



to convince the most mordant of cynics that Mr. Gokhale was in and out an embodiment of public spirit and public service. It would perhaps be difficult to cite the example of another Indian who achieved so much within fifty years of a whole life. For precocity Mr. Gokhale stands unparalleled in India. A graduate at eighteen, Professor at twenty, editor of a journal like the *Quarterly of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha* at twenty-one, Secretary of the Provincial Conference at twenty-five, Secretary of the National Congress at twenty-nine, leading witness before a most important Royal Commission at thirty-one, provincial legislator at thirty-four, Imperial legislator at thirty-six, President of the National Congress at thirty-nine, national envoy to the Imperial Government, and founder of institutions at forty—such was Mr. Gokhale's rapid and brilliant career; and it is by no means a vain boast that born in England he might have ere long figured as a prominent Cabinet minister, giving all that was best in him in realising the benefits of self-government to his people, *instead of merely fighting and breaking his head against a stone-wall Government for that self-government for his people simply because he was born in a country like India.* We have this consolation, however, that though the objective measure of his greatness and glory may thus perhaps lose in comparison, subjectively that greatness and glory is fully equal.

We remember that our obituary article on the late Mr. Ranade ended with an observation taken from Emerson to the effect that 'No really great soul ever leaves this sphere without confiding his secret to another.' Who will not bear us out if we claim that the secret of Mr. Ranade's greatness was confided to his own disciple Mr. Gokhale? Nay, we are sure Mr. Ranade's soul will ungrudgingly admit that in certain respects at any rate the

chosen disciple surpassed the accepted Guru. If there was more breadth in the spheres of work undertaken by Mr. Ranade, Mr. Gokhale had on his side oneness of aim and deep penetration in the one field of activity he had chosen, namely practical politics. It was often interesting to see Mr. Gokhale suppressing his active sympathies with workers in the non-political fields. The conservation of energy made in this respect was deliberate, the object being to secure the isolation of his own field of activity and to try the most intensive cultivation possible for himself therein. For about ten years past Mr. Gokhale was recognised as an all-India leader in practical politics and one cannot but admire the ability and the tact with which he was able to maintain his ground on that giddy height during even the stormiest of times. He had set an example of restraint, self-sacrifice and self-abnegation which made even his elders and superiors acknowledge it with silent reverence and secret admiration; and the basic principles underlying an institution like the S. O. I. Society may be admitted to contain the spiritual galvanization which must touch any institution or body of men before it can be called truly national. Mr. Gokhale may have had his failings and may have committed mistakes like *all* of us; but the true test to be applied to him lies in the question—Whitherward was the ship of his life steering all along? And to this question there can emphatically be but one answer, namely, towards the star of national emancipation. It falls to the lot of very few in any country to give such a glorious account of their life as Mr. Gokhale has given; and his name will remain emblazoned for all time in the records of this country.

(21-2-1915)

BOOK II  
LITERARY & DISQUISITIONAL

## Poetry Versus Civilisation

The title of my paper this evening is not of my own choosing. I should have liked to speak of "Aids of Civilisation to Poetry." But that may be only when I have first tried to disprove the alleged conflict between the former and the latter. The present thesis is, as it were, thrust upon me by those—some of them very high literary authorities,—who hold that Poetry and Civilisation are opposed to and incompatible with one another. I venture to hold that there is no real conflict between the two; and I propose, therefore, to discuss some aspects of this controversy as they strike me.

Most of you are probably aware of Macaulay's views on this point. In his essay on Milton, that brilliant writer has attempted to prove that Poetry is absolutely incompatible with Civilisation, and that Milton was a great poet certainly not because he was highly educated or highly civilised, but rather even in spite of his education and civilisation. Macaulay's reasoning is somewhat as follows. As Civilisation advances, Poetry almost necessarily declines. For, the progress of the experimental arts not only confers no benefits on the imitative arts, but on the contrary hampers them. Civilisation and refinement may, indeed, improve the instruments necessary to the mechanical operations involved in the fine arts. But even that is not the case with language which is the instrument of the poet. The language of the rudest age of society is the most fitted for a poet. The vocabulary of a civilised society is made up of generalities and abstractions. The vocabulary of a primitive society is made up of direct perceptions *i. e.*

impressions received from individual images. In proportion as men *know more* and *think more*, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They are, therefore, better theorists but worse poets. They may be able to make better analysis of men and things; but analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to *portray*, not to *dissect*. No person can be a poet or even enjoy Poetry without a certain unsoundness of mind. The words of the Poet must produce an illusion on the imagination; but no mind, which itself is not under the charm of such illusion, can utter such magic words. No man can be a poet who is not subject, at least occasionally, to a "fine frenzy" which can "turn the forms of things unknown to shapes and give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name." Truth indeed is essential to poetry, but it must be the truth of madness. The poet may be able to reason well from the premises to the conclusion. But his very premises must be false in the sense that they are suppositions made by a highly sensitised and even credulous mind, which borders on insanity or a temporary derangement of the intellect. It is only credulous minds that imagination can rule with despotism; and despotism of the imagination can be seen only in an uncivilised or rude state of society. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses and even of good ones but little poetry. Men cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction. Macaulay has returned to the charge in his essay on Dryden where he says that a man becomes a poet only by giving faith to the creations of the imagination. In the very moment, the skill of the artist is preceived by the cold intellect of the critic, the

spell of the art, he says, is broken. Macaulay is always remarkable for the breadth of his exposition, I mean the power of putting the same import in a variety of forms; and the reference under consideration is perhaps among the most notable illustrations of that power.

In my humble opinion, however, the position taken up by Macaulay is untenable. It is true, as has been observed by Rev. Dr. Robertson, that "Men are poets before they are philosophers. They feel with sensibility and describe with force, when they have made but little progress in investigation or reasoning. The age of Homer and of Hesiod long preceded that of Thales or of Socrates." Also as observed by Dr. Hugh Blair, "The earliest accounts which History gives us concerning all nations bear testimony to the fact that poetry preceded prose, not in private conversation but so far at least as the discharge or celebration of all public functions is concerned. In the first ages of Greece, Priests, Philosophers and Statesmen all delivered their instructions in poetry. Apollo, Orpheus, and Amphion, their most ancient bards, are represented as the first tamers of mankind, the first founders of law and civilisation. Minos and Thales sung to the lyre the laws which they composed; and till the age immediately preceding Herodotus, history had appeared in no other form than that of poetical tales." The same is the case with all other nations. In India the oldest Sanskrit literature is discovered to be in the form of poems; and verse has been the universally favoured vehicle with the Hindu law-givers, so much so that the old habit remained, even when prose had attained a high degree of perfection, and was generally used in all other departments of the affairs of society. Very probably Macaulay was struck with the surprising fact that Poetry precedes Prose, and is to be met with even in the most primitive strata of society.

But precedence of Poetry does not mean exclusion of Poetry for all time to come thereafter. And there is, I think, no warrant for his supposition that instead of growing with the growth of civilisation Poetry has only suffered and declined in succeeding ages. It is true that in primitive times you meet with a kind of simplicity and freshness of mind and directness of manner which is charming. But it is possible to exaggerate these charms and to put them above refinement and culture, which grows with Civilisation and only heightens the grandeur and deepens the effect of Poetry.

Let us briefly consider what is Poetry and what is Civilisation, so that we may find out whether there is anything in the nature of either which must be incompatible with the other. Poetry is the language of deep emotion, embellished with good taste and couched in the most appropriate phraseology. Civilisation on the other hand means, in its dynamic sense, greater knowledge of Nature and its powers, wider experience of the world, growing command over the resources and a growing craving for the pleasures of a life of refinement. Even Macaulay would, I suppose, allow that human nature is nearly the same in all ages; so that no weakening effect upon Poetry need be expected from that quarter. The science of Psychology may have progressed during the advancing centuries. But the human mind and motives have ever been the same. The only variable quantity would, therefore, seem to be the growth of the knowledge of Nature and her powers, and that must have, according to Macaulay, shattered all the wonderment of which the primitive mind, credulous and mystified, may have been capable. Macaulay would seem to say ignorance is poetical beatitude and to be wise is to be unpoetic. He evidently aims at the supposed critical character of Natural Science when he says that the spell

of the charm is broken as soon as the secret of the art becomes known.

This view is made up of various unwarranted assumptions. And we may examine some of the more pertinent among them. Now first of all what do we mean by ancient poetry? The answer must be—Poetry which has survived to us and is actually available for perusal. This may be taken to be the best specimen of the class; the law of the survival of the fittest must certainly have operated even in this respect. The Greek Rhapsodists came before Homer; and according to the law laid down by Macaulay, were better poets than Homer. But why is it that all of them are forgotten? Then, again, is really the *Illiad* or the *Odessey*, or the *Æneid*, or the songs of the Hebrew poets, or the *Mahabharata*, or the *Ramayan*, or the Vedic hymns—each of these superior in poetic genius or expression to anything the modern world has seen?

I would humbly, say, no. The quantitative test of judging poets is not of much consequence; but that may once for all be disposed of. One swallow cannot make a summer nor a solitary sonnet a poet. The volume of the works of a poet is some indication of his capacity as a poet. And I would hazard a conjecture, though it may seem cynical, that a certain percentage of the admirers of the old epic poems—Occidental as well as Oriental—are impressed more with their bulk than with their quality. But the two works of Homer amount to a few thousand lines; the total of all the poems of Virgil may be put down at 15 thousand lines only. Obviously, therefore, we shall be able to point out at least half a dozen poets in modern times who have written more poetry, bulk for bulk. The *Illiad*, again, is not free from the suggestion of interpolations on a large scale. The *Ramayana* is perhaps the work of a single poet; but many critics think that the work



of Valmiki ends with the पृथ्वी Kand, and that the उत्तर Kand is the work of some other poet. As for the Mahabharata it has been conclusively proved that the original Mahabharata, the work of Vyas, was a much smaller poem consisting of about 10,000 verses. The hymns of the Rigveda are admittedly the fruits of the authorship of a number of different Rishis. That fact alone can explain the uneven quality of the Vedic songs, and it would be unjustifiable to pit the whole of the Vedas against the works of any single Sanskrit poet of more recent times.

Coming to the quality of the ancient poems, I must contest the claim that they are, as a class, superior to modern poems. After all, epic poetry is only one class of poetry: it could not monopolise and exhaust all the elements of essence and form of which good poetry is capable. Every age has its own preferences: but no age can be allowed, on the strength of such preferences alone, to claim that its work in poetry could not be excelled in any other age. Aristotle laid down Tragedy to be the best kind of Poetry. The school of thought of which Dryden is an exponent holds that epic poetry is the best. Some time ago, I read an article in one of the English Reviews, in which the question was asked—Will the twentieth century produce an epic poem? And the writer himself supplied an answer, in the negative. But that, I confess, brought no sigh from my lips. For even assuming the truth of the answer, I knew that the 19th century also did not produce an epic poem worth the name: and yet that it had produced such exquisite lyrical poetry that old Homer himself, if his poetic tastes were really catholic, would have felt regret for being born 40 centuries too soon. And who can say that the 20th century also, when the time comes for taking stock of its achievements, may not have still another type of poetical refinement to show to its

credit? Indeed, the age of Shakespeare had no Homer of its own; but the age of Homer too had no Shakespeare to boast of.

The excessive and irrational admiration of old poets is due, in my opinion, to two causes. In the first place very few of us are gifted with that mental detachment, that freedom from mental prepossessions, and that brave confidence in our own age, which is required to feel and express a sincere and adequate appreciation and admiration of our own literary contemporaries. I quote from M. D. Arblay,—"Grey, Johnson, Richardson Fielding are all highly esteemed by the great body of intelligent and well-informed men. But Grey could see no merit in Rasselas and Johnson could see no merit in the Card. Fielding thought Richardson a solemn prig and Richardson perpetually expressed contempt and disgust for Fielding's lowness." A little less complacent self-adulation on the part of literary men combined with a little more outspoken appreciation and appraisal by their contemporaries would create just an ideal literary atmosphere for any age.

And secondly, we are inclined to overrate the good qualities of things old, simply because distance lends enchantment to the view. The fallacy of the millennium or the golden age, is the most patent and the hardest to die among the fond delusions in which the human mind likes to indulge. As Burke has observed in his 'Present Discontent,' to complain of the age we live and to glorify the past is a most common distemper of mankind. The good old days is an expression which is as meaningless as it is sonorous and gratifying to our love of romance.

Then, again, even assuming that Homer, Virgil and Valmiki were better poets than *any* which the modern age has produced, is it right to say that they were such

poetry. Homer's is certainly good poetry. But Homer does not give much evidence of such a struggle. Thus Prof. Jebb in his introduction to Homer, remarks :— "Homeric poetry has all the freshness and simplicity of a primitive age—all the charm which we associate with the childhood of the world: while on the other hand it has completely surmounted the rudeness of form, the struggle of thought with language, the tendency to grotesque and ignoble modes of speech, the incapacity for the maintenance of a high level, which belongs to the primitive stage in literature."

So far as may be judged by the accepted account of his life, Homer was an educated man; his occupation was that of a school master; he travelled far and wide on purpose to collect materials for his poems. Even supposing Homer's generation to be uncivilised, compared with our own, it is impossible to deny that far from being a barbarian, Homer must have been head and shoulders in advance of his contemporaries, a genius forestalling the tastes and merits of futurity. Otherwise his wondrous tale of Troy could not be, as it actually was, for generations the main-spring of Greek legend and song and the inspiration of Greek painters and sculptors.

As for Italy good poetry came in that country only with civilisation. There was a time when Italy was more uncivilised; but it was also the time when Italy showed less poetic excellence. According to Niebuhr, the German historian of Rome, all written compositions in the earliest stage of Roman society were poetical tales or lays. Several portions of the history of this period formed completely and true epic poems. The story of Coriolanus was contained in an old epic poem. All that is really beautiful in Roman story arose out of poetry. (Niebuhr's Lectures, p. 8). But it would be incorrect to

age, according to Macaulay's own acceptance of the word? Was their native fancy harmfully affected by the general advancement of the knowledge of Nature and her laws, of the power of critical analysis, or of that of world-wide generalisation? But why should we seek for a conflict between the spirit of Poetry and Civilisation in the case of the later poets, which did not exist in the case of Homer himself?

Macaulay has evidently committed the mistake of thinking that because poetic works precede prose works in the chronology of the world's history, therefore, the poetic spirit or the poetic genius must be the exclusive dower of the early uncivilised ages. But we may as well argue that because *imagination is born before the powers of reasoning* in the human child, therefore the child is a better poet than the man. But we never meet with infantine poems which deserve anything more than patronising admiration; while productions, worthy of the name of poetry, and deserving intelligent appreciation, are the work of more or less mature intellects. For, Poetry after all is not a mere matter of the fancy or the imagination. No one can be a poet without the gift of imagination. But also *no one can be a poet who is gifted only with imagination and nothing else*. Indeed as Macaulay says the poet's mind must be tinged with imaginative madness. But there are different varieties of madness; and the particular kind of madness, *required for a Poet*, is *not the madness* resulting from a congenital, permanent and hopeless absence of intellect, but the madness resulting from a willing and temporary subordination of the intellect to serve and *glorify the imagination*. All the mental attributes of culture must co-exist with a rich imagination in the mind of the true poet. It is only such a combination that can make possible the 'voluntary' madness

which characterises a poet and distinguishes him from a real lunatic. The poetic madness is a perfectly voluntary condition of mind like the समाधि of a Yogi, who too often resembles a lunatic but has to be distinguished from him.

The true poet must have a capacity to successfully delude his mind; and it is only when he can delude himself that he may delude others. But the delusion of the mind is a voluntary process and a voluntary pleasure. The deception of the senses, says Bacon, is a pleasure; but the poet submits to the jugglery of his fancy no less voluntarily, than when we sit down to be befooled by the fire-eating magician or necromancer. The only fact of the matter is that in Poets, the fancy or imagination is comparatively more vigorous than the other elements of the mind, and is called into activity by inspiration. But inspiration has no laws and no nationality, and, therefore, a Poet must be taken only to represent an individuality, not a class or a generation of society. If it at all becomes possible to ear-mark a Poet as belonging to a particular age or a particular society, it is not by reason of his fancy or imagination, but by the sociological raw material out of which the refined product of his poems is manufactured. The subjective element is the same; it is only the objective setting that changes and therefore presents the appearance of a different picture.

I doubt very much whether Homer himself, or even the society in which he lived, moved and had his being, was really so credulous as to actually believe in all the mythological nonsense which is recorded in the *Iliad*. In his *Odessey*, Homer makes his hero Ulysses visit the Shades to consult the dead. But the poet's creed as to the state of disembodied spirits, as revealed in the Poem, can be no more taken as evidence of his personal credulity

than the vivid descriptions of the nether regions contained in Dante's Poem can be taken to evidence his ideas of the actual life after death.

Credulity is certainly not the right word for describing any of the mental phases of a Poet. He may be devoted to an *imaginary ideal*; but that cannot necessarily tear him away from the affairs of the world. It is the habit of Poets to describe themselves as madly in love with things ethereal; but the pretence is or should be well understood on all hands; and the flesh of the poets has always betrayed them. The world too often takes them at their word; but the actual life of most of the Poets does not materially differ from that of their prosaic compeers. A poet is sometimes only a little more fitted for writing poetry than others of his contemporaries. But that does not mean that some of those who do not actually write poetry, have not an equally intense poetic temperament. Even to-day in England it would be possible to find half-a-dozen men who are not called Poets, as not having written any considerable amount of poetry, but who nevertheless may be more finely poetic in their inspiration, spirit and language than the present Poet Laureate Austin. Are not the famous painters, sculptors, musicians and prose drama writers in these civilised ages real Poets, notwithstanding the fact that they have not written any poetry technically so-called? And if all these various fine arts have not suffered by Civilisation, why should Poetry—literary and versified Poetry alone,—have suffered from that cause? How many undiscovered or unrevealed poets there must be in the ranks of men employed in so many specialised departments of human affairs in this age of Civilisation? Can we say that they have not become poets simply because they were not gifted with poetic inspiration, or only because their minds have

accidentally been diverted into grooves which leave them not much space to turn round to do justice to their muse ? Is it not possible that many a poet *in posse* might not have become a Poet *in esse*, simply because he happened to attach more importance to some other affair of human interest than writing Poetry ? How many unlabelled poets would it be possible to find among the politicians, the scientists, the historians, the clergymen of the past and present generations ? Macaulay himself in his " Scenes from Athenian Revels " makes Alcibiades utter sentiments which should prove my present contention. While a feast is in progress at Alcibiades' house, the flowing of the soul is going on side by side with the flowing of good wine : and conversation leads to the Greek Politician reciting certain lines of poetry composed by himself. Some one asks " whose lines are those, Alcibiades ? " The hero replies " my own. " And he adds :—" Think you because I do not shut up myself to meditate, and drink water and eat herbs, that I cannot write verses ? By Apollo, if I did not spend my days in politics and my nights in revelry I should have made Sophocles tremble. But I never go beyond a little sonnet like this." A similar claim might be safely made on behalf of many talented politicians like Beaconsfield, Curzon, and others.

Philosophy is concerned with pure argument and analysis, with broad generalisation for a change. But even Philosophers may have a poetic turn of mind. We shall take the case of Burke. No one will like to describe him by any other name than a Philosopher. And yet let me remind you of a small passage from his *Reflections on the French Revolution* and ask you to pronounce whether it is Prose or Poetry :—

" It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the Dauphiness at Versailles,

And surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision.

"I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But alas, the age of Chivalry is gone &c."

Now if Burke had written an epic poem on the French Revolution this passage would have been quoted as a good specimen of his poetry. As it is, the cannons of criticism would allow it to be only eloquence and not poetry.

I may give one or two Indian instances. जगन्नाथराय was a professed पंडित, an अट्टकारि *rhetorician* and a man of learning; but he was also a poet. The famous words are attributed to him *ut*.,

तंकेवु कहेसियो वयमेव नान्ये  
काव्येवु रंजितथियो वयमेव नान्ये

which mean "I alone and none else can be as harsh as truth, when it is a matter of argument : and I alone and no one else has a mind so susceptible to the beauties and pleasures of Poetry." These are vainglorious words hardly befitting a man of learning whose only ornament is modesty. But here we are concerned only with the fact that a highly logical mind and a highly poetical imagination did co-exist in Jagannath. Another instance would be that of Shankaracharya himself—the famous head of the Advait school of philosophy. The world knows him better as a philosopher than a Poet. But judging by the highly poetic स्तोत्रास he has composed, he was at least as good a poet as a philosopher, if not better.

Per contra, I will give one or two instances of Poets whose stock-in-trade was poetry, but who at the same time were lovers of science. Mr. Hayward, the author of Goethe's life, who contributed to the Foreign Classic Series, says



that Goethe's contributions to Science would have made a high reputation for any man who did not already occupy a pre-eminent position in literature. The author of 'Faust' has thrown the author of 'The Metamorphoses of Plants,' into the shade. But his claim to rank among the most profound and original thinkers on scientific subjects is now universally acknowledged. And it is not without ground that his countrymen have declared him the precursor of Darwin. Goethe's notion was that the entire plant, including fruit and flowers, is evolved from the leaf, or in other words, is a modification or transformation of it. Another notion of his was that all plants are derived from one original plant. Pursuing the same method of simplification he arrived at the vertebral structure of the skull and tried to lay the foundation of the theory that osseous forms are all traceable to one and the same type.

One of Goethe's actual discoveries was that of the inter-maxillary bone ( the centre bone of the upper jaw ) in man, the existence or the identity of which was fiercely contested by anatomists till he placed it beyond doubt. He had again a doctrine of his own as to colours which, he held, were produced by a transparent medium between light and darkness. Goethe may be, for ought I know, wrong in all his theories. But what is pertinent to my present purpose is to show that the mind of this particular poet was taken up as much by a prosaic pursuit of scientific truth as by a courtship of the Muse. And Goethe himself was far more conscious of this fact than the rest of the world. " As for what I have done as a Poet, " he once told Eckerman, " I take no pride in it whatever. Excellent poets have lived at the same time with myself; more excellent poets have lived before me, and will come after. But that in my century I am the only person who

knows the truth in the difficult science of colours; of that, I say, I am not a little proud."

Take another instance and this time, of the critical spirit which is supposed to conflict with the poetic spirit. Wordsworth, it is well-known, was both a Critic and a Poet. But even more striking is the example of Samuel Taylor Coleridge of whom it has been said that he possessed imagination enough to furnish forth a thousand poets. He is better known as a critic than a poet; and yet his *Christabel*, his *Ancient Mariner*, and his *Kubla Khan* are acknowledged master-pieces of Poetry. Poet Swinburne went into such raptures over Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* that he pronounced it "the most wonderful of all poems." Says Swinburne, "In reading it we are rapt into that paradise where music and colour and perfume are all one; where you hear the hues and see the harmonies of heaven. For absolute melody and splendour it would hardly be rash to call it the first poem of the language." Principal Shairp remarks that the magic beauty of *Christabel* brought into English poetry an atmosphere of wonder and mystery, of weird beauty and pity combined, which was quite new at the time it appeared and has never been since approached.

The love of Nature is another test of the Poetic Spirit on the touch-stone. Now Tennyson's mind was certainly civilised; but Tennyson nowhere betrays the loss of nervous susceptibility to the charms and beauties of Nature, which has been in the past and must remain eternally to the end of time in future, the one sheet-anchor of the poetic fancy or imagination.

Similes and Metaphors, I admit, are not exclusively the essence of Poetry. But in them you can always get more and better cues to the inspiration and the poetic spirit of a bard than in anything else. Figurative

language is to poetry what clothing or dress is to a human being. It is almost inconceivable to separate the two. But figurative language, further, does for poetry what clothing or dress cannot always do for human beings viz., successfully reveal their inner character. To return to Tennyson, I may say that you can hardly read a page of his poems, before you meet with convincing evidence that the poet's mind was definitely turned and attuned to Nature. By a rough calculation, I may say that 80 per cent of his figures of speech are based upon his love of Nature. I will quote only a few instances. In his *Madeline* he speaks of "Frowns perfect sweet upon the brow and light glooming over eyes divine, like clouds—sunfringed."

The memory of his childhood he describes thus:—

"When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free,

The tide of time flowed back to me."

He describes memory as "the dewy dawn."

Kate's heart is compared to a "*throbbing star*,"

Tennyson says:—

"Mine be the strength of spirit full and free

Like some broad river rushing down alone

Which in the middle of the Green Salt sea

Keeps its blue waters fresh for many a mile."

In his '*Miller's Daughter*' the poet describes the movement of the mind thus:—

"My mind hither and thither idly swayed

Like those long mosses in the stream."

In the '*Palace of Art*' he describes Homer's beard thus:—

"A hundred winters showed upon his breast

From cheek and throat and chin."

In the '*May Queen*' he compares the "wild marsh Marigold" to "fire in swamps and hollows gray."

In "*The Golden Year*" Old James is described thus:—

"Firm upon his feet

And like an Oaken stock in winter woods  
Overflushed with the hoary clematis."

He makes his Ulysses say that :—

"All experience is an arch where—through  
Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades  
Forever and forever when I move."

And Ulysses' gray spirit, we are told,

"Yearned in desire

To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought."

He describes kisses as balmier than half-opening buds  
of April.

Edward Grey tells Emma Moreland that he will love  
no more, though

"Love may come and love may go  
And fly like a bud from tree to tree."

In 'Enoch Arden' Tennyson describes approaching  
calamity thus :—

"The shadow of mischance appeared  
No graver than as when some little cloud  
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun  
And isles a light in the offing "

Enoch, we are told, seemed to his children

" Uncertain as a vision or a dream  
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn  
Dawn at the far end of an avenue."

In the same poem we find evil fancies clinging together  
pithily described as serpent eggs clinging together.

Enoch Arden's hope and prayer are described thus :—

"His resolve upbore him and firm faith  
Prayed from a living source within the will  
And beating up through all the bitter will  
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea."

In 'Aylmer's Field', we have this description of a dagger :—

"A dagger in rich sheath with jewels on it  
Sprinkled about in gold that branched itself  
Fine as ice ferns on January panes  
Made by a breath."

In his 'Princess,' Tennyson describes boys rolling about like tumbled fruit in grass.

In the same poem we have the echo compared to a "ghostly wood-pecker hidden in the ruins." Again,

"His was bland smile that like  
Wrinkling wind on glassy water  
Drove his cheek in lines."

Again,

"I sat down and wrote  
In such a hand as when a field of corn  
Bows all its ears before the roaring east."

Lady Psyche's class of female students is described thus :—

"There sat along the forms, like morning doves  
That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch  
At patient range of pupils."

The women are described fleeing

"As flies a troop of snowy doves  
Athwart the dusk  
When some one batters at the dovecot doors."

Again, we have here a genuine touch of nature :—

"Then with a smile that looked

A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff, when all the  
glens are drowned in azure gloom of thunder shower,  
she floated to me."

Honour is, says Tennyson,

'Flake of rain-bow flying in the highest  
Foam of men's deeds."

I think one can go on *ad infinitum* in this fashion pointing out that, though himself highly educated and though living in a highly civilised society, Tennyson's mind was not hardened into prosaic unsusceptibility, but was as fresh and keen and alive to the touch of the objects of Nature, and this his inspiration could be stimulated by them with as much zest and genuine joy, as if he had lived in what Macaulay may call a rude and uncivilised age. On the other hand I may point out that the Greeks in *their rudest and most poetic condition failed to show any susceptibility to the charms of Nature.*

I would now give only two instances which conclusively show that Civilization, that is to say, the advance of Science, had positively enabled Tennyson to add, to his primitive love of Nature, the other benefits of the poetic side of scientific and systematised knowledge. Take for instance the description of the scientific exhibition and fancy fair with which you meet in Tennyson's prologue to the Princess:—

Sir Walter Vivian, we are told, had one summer's day given up his lawns to the people and the Institute in his borough, of which he was the patron. And here is a description of the scene on the lawn, where the patient leaders of the Institute were teaching the people—young and old—with facts, that is to say were holding scientific demonstrations.

"One reared a font of stone  
And drew from butts of water on the slope  
The fountain of the moment, playing, now  
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,  
Or steep up spout, where on the gilded ball  
Danced like a wisp. And somewhat lower down  
A man, with knobs and wires and vials, fired  
A canon. Echo answered in her sleep

From hollow fields; and here were telescopes  
 For azure views and there a group of girls  
 In circle waited, whom the electric shock  
 Dislinked with shrieks and laughter. Round the lake  
 A little clock-work steamer paddling plied  
 And shook the lilies. Perched about the knells  
 A dozen angry models jetted steam.  
 A petty railway ran. A fire balloon  
 Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves  
 And dropt a fairy parachute and past.  
 And there through twenty posts of telegraph  
 They flashed a saucy message to and fro  
 Between the mimic stations. So that  
 Sport went hand in hand with science."

Is this not an excellent example of portraiture by a poet himself refined and living in a civilised age of the common and apparently prosaic things of science? For an instance of the benefits conferred on Poetry by science, I will refer you to the passage in *In Memoriam* in which Tennyson evidently alludes to the latest researches in science in his days. Thus he sings:—

"Are God and Nature then at strife  
 That Nature lends such evil dreams  
 So careful of the type she seems,  
 So careless of the single life?  
 So careful of the type? But No!  
 From scarped cliff and quarried stone  
 He cries 'A thousand types are gone;  
 I care for nothing, all shall go.'"

Further on:—

"Who trusted God was love indeed,  
 And love creation's final law—  
 Though Nature red in tooth and claw  
 With ravine shrieked against his creed!

A monster then, a dream  
 A discord. Dragons of the Prime  
 Who tear each other in their slime  
 Were mellow music matched with him. " &c.

Here you have a poetic use made of scientific truths such as the doctrines of evolution and the survival of the fittest. Mr. Laing in his *Problems of the Future* says:—"I never read those noble lines without almost a thrill of awe at the intense truthfulness with which they sum up the latest conclusions of the human intellect. Here at last is the true Truth, based on the inexorable facts and laws of *modern science*." Surely Tennyson has studied his Darwin; but that has not driven the Poetry out of him. He shares his enlightened scepticism with Herbert Spencer; but the glow of his poetic fire is not dimmed by the shadow of that sombre philosophical doctrine. The jaw-breaking Ichthyosaurus and the Plesiosarus geological types no doubt furnished Tennyson with his facts when he speaks of the

"Dragons of the prime  
 Who tear each other in the slime."

But the beauty of the poetic portraiture is only heightened and not affected by the facts of science.

But it cannot be otherwise. The poet who described the Moon as a lump of green cheese or as the Diana, roaming with a silver bow in hand in the celestial hunting grounds, certainly knew better about the elemental composition of the moon. And even now that we can calculate the moon's movements to a minute and read the spectrum analysis of her light, we can never successfully resist the temptation to submit, nay even invoke, the pleasant delusion, in which we may think of her as a smiling Bride going to the altar, or as a jolly-boat sailing in the wide azure lake, amidst the bunches of astral lilies or as the



queen of the heavens enjoying in her journey the hospitality of her vassals in the astral rest-houses. Kalidas certainly knew what a cloud is composed of; but in ascribing to the love-infatuated *Yaksha* the mad freak of choosing a cloud as a messenger to his lady love, the great poet only reveals the capability of his own creative genius.

धूमज्योतिः सलिलमरुतां संनिपातः क्व मेघः  
संदेशार्थाः क्व पदुकरजैः प्राणिभिः प्रापणायाः  
इत्यौत्सुक्यात् अपरिगणयन् गुह्यकृत्तं यथाचे  
कामार्ता हि प्रकृतिकृपणाः चेतनाचेतनेषु ।

It may be translated thus:—

“What possible connection can there be between a cloud which consists of smoke, light, water and wind and messages which can be carried only by creatures endowed with sound organs of sense? Yet unmindful of this, through eagerness, the *यक्ष* did request the cloud; for love-smitten persons are naturally incapable of distinguishing between animate and inanimate things.” The distinction between the animate and the inanimate things is strictly scientific; but the poet, no less than the lover, is not deterred by the knowledge and freely exercises the unbridled right to ignore the boundary marks of logical division.

The fact is that the faculty of the discernment of truth, however strong, can never kill the imagination or fancy. The use of the word ‘Credulity’ in describing the state of the mind of a poet, even when he is actually writing or composing poetry, is inaccurate. Credulity means capability of easy unreasoned belief; but you must remember that it is *real* belief all the same. The credulous man is generally weak-minded, unsuspicious and gullible; he believes things without sufficient evidence for the belief. But his belief is very real, there is no pretence about it. And sometimes a credulous man is as strong and tenacious

in his belief as he is weak and easy-going in the reasoning which leads him to that belief. Those people in the Middle Ages who believed in witches certainly fall under the category of credulous men. They were very weak in reasoning but so strong in their belief all the same that they would not be satisfied without burning the witches. But far different is the case with poets. The poetic belief is no belief but a mere pretence at belief, though a very innocent and beautiful pretence for all purposes. The belief of the credulous man is irrational because, he loses sight of or does not understand the law of cause and effect. He is guilty of a fault in the process of reasoning. The belief of the poet, if we may call it a belief, is irrational not because he reasons ill, but because his premises are false. But he knows the premises to be false and yet deliberately makes use of them. Let us suppose a poet so impressed with the affectionate kindness of his noble housewife that he writes a sonnet upon her and describes her therein as an angel in the house. Here the belief as to the good woman being an angel was never real, it was only a pretence of a belief of that kind. He would call her angel but would never expect her to fly into the heaven with outspread wings. Another poet cursed with a wife of the opposite qualities would, if poetically inclined, describe her as a witch; but his belief would be a pretence all the same and he would not proceed to burn her as a witch. The history of Rationalism which Lecky has written appertains to really credulous beliefs, but not to such seemingly credulous beliefs as poets affect for the moment. What is real about the Poet is his feeling or emotion, but not the image in words which he gives to that feeling. He believes in the central truth he preaches; but certainly not in the images he conjures up and the scenes he paints in order to emphasise his preaching or to

make it attractive. Science or civilisation may, therefore, cure the credulous beliefs, but it can never cure the Poets of their beliefs because they are only pretended. You can shout out and awaken the man who is really asleep and dispel his pleasant or unpleasant dreams. But you cannot awaken a man who is already awake; and day-dreams are dreams that can never be dispelled. It is said of Poet Dante that his pencil was dipped in the gloom of earthquake and eclipse, and that he loved to accumulate images of terror and suffering which speedily passed into the works of artists, enthralled and fascinated the imaginations of the people and completed a transformation of their ideas. But surely the Poet himself did not believe in his images in the same sense in which eventually they came to be believed in by the people. The Furies of Æschylus frightened his spectators but not the dramatist himself. If Shylock and Iago were to stand before them, in flesh and blood, some of the readers of Shakespeare may be with great difficulty prevented from lynching them; and yet if Shakespeare himself were present at the scene, he would be perhaps only laughing in his sleeves all the while. A young fair reader of the story of the Red Riding Hood may the next moment feel afraid of entering a dark room because she would really believe, even if by mere suggestion and therefore on insufficient evidence, that the wolf in the story might be actually sleeping on her own bed. But the writer of the story would not feel frightened simply because he never really believed but only pretended to believe in the wolf. The girl we may describe as credulous, but the author of the story as only imaginative. So also all Mythology is originally poetry; but it becomes Mythology, simply because the key to the magic room of the imagination was lost and the readers began to believe with a real,

genuine or *pukka* belief into the fanciful stories as facts. But all Mythology can be successfully re-transformed into Poetry, if the key of the pretences becomes available and is used. That explains why the Mythology of Pagan Greece is largely used and cherished as a literary asset by Christian writers, though the difference between the religious creeds of the two is very great and very keen. Macaulay, therefore, is not right when he says that Poets are to be distinguished from Critics by the fact that the Poet gives faith to the creations of his imagination, whereas the critic treats those creations as deceptions. I think it would be more true to say that both the poet and the critic know and treat the creations of imagination as deceptions. But they both look at the deceptions from different points of view. The poet puts forth the deception as a product of his powers of imagination; and the critic assays it for literary merit and sees how far it comes up to the imaginary pattern set by good taste. All faith as such, however, is out of the question. The deception is never real; it is pretended and therefore voluntary; and because it is voluntary it has no fear of being found out. The material balloon can be successfully pricked; but the balloon made by the poet with the soap bubbles of the imagination can never be pricked. The world again never complains of the deception by the Poet. It only likes him all the more for it. The desire to be deluded by imagination is insistent, unobstructible and insatiable. Its fire will never be quenched by the coldest bath of reasoning. I may give one or two instances. Some profound statistician or antiquarian has, I am told, calculated that Helen, the heroine of the *Illiad*, must have been at least one hundred years old when the siege to Troy, if historically real, was laid by the Greeks. But as the result of the antiquarian's discovery, who ever liked to

give up the beautiful image of the youthful and beautiful heroine, described by Homer ? We rather prefer to ignore the antiquarian calculation and cherish the sweet memory of Helen such as we are taught to think she must have been when she captivated Paris. We prefer, in spite of the antiquarian, to agree with the gallant Trojans who would look upon her with fondness, though she was the cause of their troubles; who regarded the world well lost for her; who annihilated the Greeks and got annihilated by them in turn for her sake before the walls of Troy. So also, when Arjun, the hero of the Mahabharata, visited the realms of Indra, Urvashi, the beautiful celestial damsel, is described as having sought to catch him in the meshes of her love. But the author has unwittingly made her to declare that she was the object of love of and sought by old-world Arjun's ancestors. That makes Urvashi palpably as old as the hills ; and yet we never think of the jarring discrepancy, and never allow its point even if we advert to it, to prick the balloon of our imagination or spoil the painting of the ever youthful beautiful Urvashi as painted by the colours of imagery.

And now let us not overlook the further great fact, that not only does science underlie sculpture, painting, music, poetry, but that science is itself poetic. The current opinion that science and poetry are opposed is a delusion. It is doubtless true that as states of consciousness, cognition and emotion they tend to exclude each other. And it is doubtless also true that an extreme activity of the reflective powers tends to deaden the feelings; while an extreme activity of the feelings tends to deaden the reflective powers; in which sense, indeed, all orders of activity are antagonistic to each other. But it is not true that the facts of science are unpoetical ; or that the cultivation of science is necessarily unfriendly to the exercise

of imagination and the love of the beautiful. On the contrary, science opens up realms of poetry where to the unscientific all is a blank.

Probably in Macaulay's time research had not so far penetrated into the depths of science, as it has done since. This fact may perhaps account for the poor opinion he seems to entertain of the capacity of science for ministering to the love of the human mind for magic and mystery. But no one to whom has been vouchsafed a peep into the endless vistas and avenues of science of the present day, is likely to commit a similar mistake. As remarked by Hudson Maxim, an American author, "The advance of cold calculating scienceneed not make us fearful of losing as a play-ground for the imagination that old wonder world from which we are emerging. For even to day the magic wand of gray-haired Science halts confounded on the brink of the unknowable, and he reaches to take hands with his mystic brother while together they peer into the depths. The wonder-science which we inherit from the long ages is stronger in us than the new born science of reason. Poetry has its foundation upon our inheritance from the wonder world of the remote past, while science is a *parvenu*. Fact falls weary-winged in its flight with fancy." I may add, Fact has been piled upon fact so that sky-kissing towers have been raised of that material. But fancy, mounted on them, is only tantalised with each advancing ascent by the ever-receding horizon of the magic universe.

Poetry, says Bacon, is the 'mixture of a lie that doth ever add pleasure. And who even in a civilised age does not like to indulge in pleasant poetic lies which tickle the imagination? The 19th century has been an era of civilisation and the advance of science and criticism. And yet, curiously enough, no other century ever witnessed such

an outburst of lyrical poetry which is essentially made up of poetic lies. The past century was remarkably barren in descriptive or didactic poetry, but it produced, in great abundance, Lyric poetry which, one of the most severely logical minds, we mean J. S. Mill, pronounced to be "more eminently and peculiarly poetry than any other." It is, he says, the poetry most natural to a really poetic temperament and least capable of being successfully initiated by one not so endowed by nature. The period of English literature between 1790 and 1825 during which the aftermath of the French Revolution was being experienced all over Europe and the light of new political theories was upon the waters, was certainly not a period of rude barbarism for England; and yet the period had been such a creative period that the outburst of native song which then took place made it one of the world's great poetic eras. The same may be said of the creative period of English literature in the latter half of the 19th century when, notwithstanding the strides made by advancing science and civilisation, the imaginative temperament of the English people was not suppressed but only revived. Carlyle indeed was fond of remarking that Reality is God's unwritten poem and that plain prose alone as a vehicle of reality was welcome to him. But Carlyle was writing poetry all the while without knowing it, and Principal Shairp has put Carlyle under the category of Prose poets along with Cardinal Newman. Of this period the same high authority says:—"So far is it from being true that Reason has put out imagination, that perhaps there never was a time when reason so imperatively called imagination to her aid and when imagination entered so largely into a literary and even into scientific products. Imaginative thought which formerly expressed itself but rarely except in verse, now enters into almost every form of prose except the

barely statistical. Indeed the boundary lines between poetry and prose have become obliterated, as those between prose and verse have become more than ever rigid. Consider how wide is the range of thought over which imagination now travels, how vast is the work it is called upon to do."

I must now wind up my thesis which is rather spread out indiscriminately. And I had to do so because Macaulay happens to use the words civilisation, science, culture, criticism all nearly in the same sense as being inconsistent with poetry. But before concluding this paper, I would briefly indicate the limits within which Macaulay's contention would be true. If Macaulay meant only to say that there is a temporary incompatibility between the poetic and the reflective impulse just for the moment, then he would be right. It may be admitted that two such things cannot occupy the same point of space at the same identical moment of time in the human individual, further that as regards a country or a nation the particular decade which has been most famous for its poetry may not also be the most famous for its criticism. But the two things can certainly exist in the same individual, the same age or the same nation at least in this sense that they come in alternation one with the other, as in cycles. A qualified statement of that kind would be nearer the truth. Thus in the poet, first comes the creative mood as soon as he has a vision of some truth; but he cannot put that vision into words which we may call a finished poem, before he has criticised and polished the vision so as to make it fit, neat and tidy. In the history of nations also creative epochs alternate with epochs of criticism. The criticism of Aristotle and the Alexandrian critics came after Homer, but was followed by Virgil and the other great Latin poets who were practically Hellenic in thought. The



same perhaps may be said of England in which poets and critics have alternated with one another, though on the other hand, we have also to reckon with the fact that Shakespeare the poet and Bacon the critic and philosopher were contemporaries; so also Tennyson and Matthew Arnold. But to return to Macaulay, he never really means the temporary incompatibility of Poetry and Philosophy, but practically claims an exclusive precedence for poetry in the early history of every nation and of mankind generally and denies true poetry to them forever afterwards allowing them such compensation or consolation as they may derive from their possession of valuable by-products of the situation. The chief defect in Macaulay's reasoning is that he has used the words civilisation, culture, education, criticism in their largest sense for a *very small purpose, and the defect is aggravated by the over-statements which he was led to make in his zeal for shaping striking antithesis*. It is not true that civilisation, science, culture and criticism are in themselves in conflict with the poetic spirit, genius or art. But it is possible that each of these may be so used as to prejudicially affect the growth or the expression of real poetic temperament and spirit. There are three categories to think of in this connection; un-cultivation, good cultivation and mal-cultivation. Absolute uncultivation and good cultivation would both of them be consistent with good poetry; only malcultivation would not. Macaulay thinks that uncultivation or a rude state of mind is just the thing, an ideal condition for the thriving of the poetic spirit, and that even the best of culture and education are bound to kill that poetic spirit. The view farthest removed from this of Macaulay's is that of Arnold, the famous English literary critic, who holds that no poet can be a great or a good poet unless he has thoroughly studied and master-

ed all the available critical material. He would make a deep critical spirit and knowledge of up-to-date poetics almost a necessary condition for a man to be able to write good poetry. Between these two extreme limits fall the views of philosophers such as Mill and Spencer and men of letters such as Principal Shairp and others. Shairp dissents from Arnold and holds that a deep study in criticism is not at all necessary for a poet, but in doing so he just slightly leans to the view of Macaulay that criticism may injuriously affect Poetry. Spencer has, as I have already pointed out, demonstrated the exact opposite of Macaulay's doctrine and proved that culture and the knowledge of sciences may be positively expected to assist the pursuit of the art of poetry and heighten its effects. Mill alone has, in my opinion, hit the bull's eye in the target of the present controversy. He holds that strong feelings require a strong intellect to carry them, as more sail requires more ballast, and when owing to neglect or bad education that strength is wanting, no wonder if the grandest or the swiftest vessels make the most utter wreck. Whether the superiority will naturally be on the side of the philosopher-poet or the mere poet, whether the writings of the one ought as a whole to be truer and their influence more beneficent than those of the other, is too obvious in principle to need statement: it would be absurd to doubt whether two endowments would be better than one. But unfortunately in practice the matter is not so simple: there the question often is which is the least prejudicial to the intellect—un-cultivation, or mal-cultivation. Well, mal-cultivation may destroy any good quality in any man. But that is very different from Macaulay's view according to which one may argue that poetic spirit is a star which shines in the mental sky only while darkness reigns supreme; and further that

the star of poetry is not only outshone by the break of the dawn of education and culture, but unlike the ordinary stars actually falls away from its place, like Lucifer, never to rise again.

I will now conclude by saying that the Indian mind had long before our time adverted to this controversy. For we find statements such as कर्कशतर्कविचारव्यग्रः किं वेत्ति काव्यहृदयानि । ग्राम्य इव क्षुपिप्रिलग्रः चंचलनयनावचोरदृश्यानि । which may be translated thus —The mind eaten up with thought relating to harsh logic —what can it know of the heart of Poetry ? Surely it must be a sealed book to the logician and the philosopher, as the subtle wiles of the courtly coquette must be to the rustic shepherd.

But on the other hand we have statements like the one contained in this Sloka—येषां कामलकाव्यकौशलकला लीलाप्रतीभारती । तेषां चर्कगतर्कप्रवचनोद्गारेर्न किं दीयते etc. which I shall *freely* translate as follows.—

"The master of the muse does not lose the delicacy of his heart simply because he has sometimes to deal with harsh words of philosophy. The warrior's fingers that are used to draw the bow-string and discharge terrible arrows on the enemy, can also move with quickening tender touch among the silken locks of his lady-love !" And I will conclude by saying that I agree with the latter judgment.

(7-2 1912)

### 'Seasons'

BY KALIDAS AND THOMSON

It is my privilege to-day to ask you to join with me in studying the poetic treatment of an identical subject by two different poets viz. of 'Seasons' by Kalidas and

Thomson. Poetry is a universal entity : it recognises no limitations of time and space, no distinctions of race, creed and colour. And so it comes to pass that you and I are all sitting together this evening to compare our mental notes with regard to two poets who were separated from each other in point of time by over a thousand years, and should have lived apart, even if they were contemporaries, at a distance of over 5 thousand miles. Kalidas, as you are all aware, is the older poet. He is said to have lived in the 6th century A. D. and belonged to some Royal Court in upper India. But nothing is known about him except some fabulous anecdotes. Popular opinion gives him the first place among the mediæ Sanskrit poets, and he has given to the Sanskrit speaking people classics which will always remain their pride and their delight.

Fortunately we know more about Thomson. He was born in the year 1700 and died in 1748. He was educated at Edinburgh, and made an early acquaintance with sacred literature. Considering that his expectations from the study of theology might be precarious, and feeling confident that he might make a name in literature, Thomson came to London. In 1727 he published his 'Winter' which at once secured universal admiration. He came to be admitted to high class society and made valuable acquaintances. During the next three years he published his three other Seasons and also wrote some 'patriotic' poetry by which he attracted the attention of the general public. He was then selected as a tutor to a nobleman's son on his continental journeys, and this gave him an opportunity to visit and observe the courts and capitals of foreign countries. By the death of his patron Lord Talbot, which occurred in 1737, Thomson found himself reduced from easy competence to precarious dependence which remained with him almost to his end. His friends were, however, always

good to him; and an allowance was settled upon him by the then Prince of Wales at the recommendation of Lord Lyttleton. Besides 'Seasons,' Thomson wrote a poem called 'the Castle of Indolence' and some tragedies which were more or less successful on the stage. Thomson was essentially a sensible man good at wit and conversation. He was fond of music, gardening and painting. He was serene of temperament and studiously avoided the poetical squabbles that furiously raged around him. As for Thomson's merits as a poet I would content myself with quoting Dr. Johnson, who says that as a writer Thomson was entitled to one praise of the highest kind: his mode of thinking and expressing his thoughts is *original*. He thinks in a peculiar train and he thinks always as a man of genius. He looks round on nature and life with the eye which Nature bestows only on a poet, *i e.*, the eye that distinguishes in everything, presented to its view, whatever there is on which the imagination can delight to be detained.

With this short preface about the poets themselves, let us turn to their works.

An external comparison of the 'Seasons' by Kalidas and Thomson gives the following points. The *ऋतुसंहार* is a small poem extending over 576 lines, divided into six cantos, each of which deals with one distinct season. Thomson's 'Seasons' is a much bigger work, running over about 5400 lines divided into four books, each dealing with one season. But while *ऋतुसंहार* is concise, 'Seasons' is diffused and tediously spun out to its present length; and I have calculated that if we lop off the unnecessary digressions and didactic sermons in the 'Seasons,' the volume could be reduced to about 1500 lines, without any injury or unfairness to the legitimate character of the work or the merits of the author as a poet. Poetic as is the descrip-

tion of the seasons where it occurs, Thomson is thoroughly unpoetic in the general disposition of the poem. Thus in each book you have to go over the same insipid round of first a statement of the case, as it were, then an invocation of the Muse, the dedication to a patron, an illustrative story, a moral sermon, and a digression into physical and mental philosophy, far removed from the poetic soul of the theme. This has, besides unduly lengthening the poem, often destroyed the unity of sentiment and thought and overburdened the central idea with prosaic excrescences. The point against *ऋतुसंहार*, on the other hand, is that, though concise, it abounds in repetitions of similar ideas, and is thus marked by a kind of monotony.

For the difference in the number of seasons, of course, neither of the poets in question is responsible. Nature itself is answerable for it. For while in temperate zones there are only four seasons, in the tropical zones you have six distinct seasons. A season may be defined as a division of the year which is marked by a *distinct* change in temperature, in the weather, in the fauna, in the flora and the general aspect of Nature. And consequently you can have very few such distinct divisions in a year, though we know there is hardly a month or a fortnight which is not accompanied by some change in any one of these particulars. It is owing to this that even in the description of seasons you sometimes find a few things in common to two, if not more seasons. On the other hand an attempt to carry on the specialisation still further, that is, to units smaller than seasons, is bound to fail. The poet Spencer has attempted something of this kind in his Calendar. In his well known pastoral he has embellished his eclogue by the addition of a Calendar. In this beautiful piece he compares human life to the several seasons and gives to his readers a view of the great and little worlds in their

various changes and aspects. Yet the scrupulous division of his pastorals into months has obliged him either to repeat the same description in other words for three months together, or, when it was exhausted before, entirely to omit it—whence it comes to pass that some of his eclogues have nothing but their title to distinguish them.

We shall now study the contents of the two poems. It is not possible for me to read to you the whole of any of these two books in the short hour at my disposal. Nor perhaps is that necessary. While, therefore, I shall content myself with pointing out to you only what I consider the beauties of Thomson, whom you can all read for yourselves, I shall devote a little more attention to the Sanskrit poem as some of you are perhaps unable to read it. Let us begin with Kalidas.

The first canto deals with Summer. In this season, you are told, the sun is terrible; the moon is sweet; the sunset lovely. the waters are at all times pleasant for a bath; water *sprouts* are set playing; the wet sandal pulp is in requisition; the open terraces are cooled with fragrant rose water; the soul-stirring amative music flows from stringed instruments; lovely women, clad in their light silken garments, put on sweet scented wreaths of flowers waving on their bosom; their pretty feet causing musical cadence with the aid of sweet silver bells, tinged with red *lacquer*, attract the mind like the cooing of the *ईयास*. The moon gazes at their fair faces, turned up for a spell of cool air, when they sleep on the white marble terraces and she turns pale towards morning through shame, as it were, for being beaten in beauty. In the afternoons the sky is thick with dust driven by unbearably strong gusts of wind, while the earth is still hot like a furnace. At this time the deer of the forest, feeling their palate parched, madly run towards the horizon which looks like a dark river bank. The

snake, roasted in the hot dust, winds its way panting and crest-fallen, and is thankful for a spell of shady rest even under the very beak of the peacock, its dread enemy, so also when the snake runs to the waterside for a cool sip and raises its hood, the frog—its prey—nestles under its shade. The lakes are all now desolate, the lotus plants have withered away; the fish are all dead; the birds are all gone; and the remains of the wet clay are trampled under the feet of the warring elephants. The herds of buffaloes leave the hot caverns of the mountain, and, foaming at their mouth, run in search of water. The arid forests look grim at a distance, as the dry leaves are hurled up in the air by powerful winds. The birds sit panting on the bare stumps of trees; the monkeys nestle into the dry thickets on the mountain sides, while the forest fires rage around in every direction. The lion, the elephant and the buffalo, forget their animosity in their common suffering, and all rush headlong over the extensive beds of hot sand in the hope of reaching the slender streak of the river water.

In the second canto we have the *rainy season* described as being ushered in, in all the pompous dignity of a king. The leaden-coloured watery cloud is his elephant; the lightning flashes serve as triumphal flags; the very thunder beats the drum for him. The sky is thick set with clouds, dark-blue like the lotus or the bosom of pregnant women. Heavy-laden with water now they move on, welcomed by the *चतुर्* birds, and showering like a multi-porous water sprout. The lover, separated from his sweetheart, indeed feels the showers as if they were arrows wickedly shot from the rainbow to make him miserable. But the earth wears a different aspect. The tender plantain leaves are unfurled; the grass blades shoot up in all directions; and the *इक्ष्वे* insects are scattered broad-cast



with समउर and gardens with मादती flowers. The rivers pace with dignity like youthful women, the fish form their girdle, the milk-white birds their neck-laces and the white sands their loins. The sky looks like a King, with dry light silvery clouds fanning him like चारी. The कोयदा tree with its tender leaves gently fanned by the wind and the bees sucking honey from its blossoms, pierces the heart of the love-sick maiden. With stars for her ornaments, with the moon freed from the clouds for her face, with clear moonlight for her silken dress, the night, like a youthful maiden, is attaining her growth day by day. The lakes, with full blown lotuses and birds the forests with the deer, the gentle morning-breeze laden with dew the farms covered with rich sheafs of rice crop, the pastures studded with grazing herds of cows, the woodlands made noisy by हंस birds, green creepers laden with white blossoms, the deep blue sky studded with stars looking like हंसas—are the objects of special beauty. But the love-lorn maiden is the worse for all these.

The fourth canto is devoted to the हेमंत which is the *advanced autumn*. The lotuses now fade; the rice is ready for reaping; cold dew drops stand on the ends of grass blades, looking like the tears of the season; the woodlands are crowded by herds of deer feeding on rice crop and by शिथ birds; the lovers cling to each other faster for warmth, as the nights are unbearably cold; they leave the bed only when the sun has risen high and slightly warmed the air; and on getting up they smear their bodies with oil.

In the fifth canto Kalidas describes the *winter*. In this season the following are the objects of desire: a house with all its windows closed, the fire in the hearth, the rays of the sun, heavy warm clothing, rich wines and youthful women with a paint of black अङ्ग on their bodies, and flowers in their hair. The fair ones do not leave the

house, but are mostly engaged in changing their dresses and preparing themselves for going to the blue bed from the brown.

The sixth canto closes the ऋतुसंहार with a description of the *spring* (वसंत). It is the favourite time of the God of Love; and you see Kalidas necessarily connecting love with the season. He describes Spring as a warrior who advances to capture the hearts of the lovers, armed with the rows of black bees for strings to his bow, and tender mango blossom for his sharp arrows, the moon is his canopy, the wind his elephant and the cuckoos his bards. Everything is now pleasant and beautiful: the Spring bestows a peculiar beauty on the water in wells, on jeweled girdles, mango trees, and on fair women. These wear chequered garments, put on कर्णिकार flowers on their ears, अशोक flowers in their hair, sandal-scented flowers on their bosom, drops of perspiration rise on their breasts and give worthy company to the pearls. Ladies now like to wear their garments rather loose. The cuckoo, maddened with the drink of mango juice, as also the bee sitting on the lotus, turns to kiss his bride. The trees are covered with red and white blossoms and the winds blow gently.

Now you will have observed that Kalidas gives a very poor description of both Winter and Autumn. His own description of *spring* in इमारसंभव is much better than the one here given. भारती in the fourth canto of his किरानार्जुनीय gives a far superior description of the Autumn which is, in my opinion, as good as that by Thomson. The description of the rainy season in मृदुलकटिक is also more poetic than that by कावेदाम in ऋतुसंहार.

I would now ask you to go over Thomson's seasons with me. The poet welcomes *spring* and hails it as ethereal mildness, coming from the bosom of the dropping cloud veiled in a shower of shadowing roses. The sun now sets

the steaming power at large to wander over verdant earth. The hawthorn whitens, and the juicy groves put forth their buds. The deer rustle through the twinkling brake and the birds sing concealed. The garden glows and fills the air with lavish fragrance while the fruit lies, yet a little embryo, unperceived within its crimson folds. It is all around, one boundless blush, one white empurpled shower of mingled blossoms. The landscape laughs around. The music of the forests mixed with that of warbling brooks, wakes the distant bleating of the hills. The temperate hours are spent in sport but at noon you seek the river bank where, scattered wild, the lily of the vale its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang the dewy head, and along whose blushing borders, bright with dew, there is the mingled wilderness of flowers. On the mountain brow sits the shepherd on the grassy turf, inhaling healthful sun; and around him feeds his bleating flock of various adence; and the sportive lambs in friskful glee their rollicks play. And flushed by the spirit of the general,

Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom  
Shoots less and less the live carnation round;  
Her lips blush deeper sweets; she breaths of youth;  
The shining moisture swells into her eyes  
In brighter flow kind tumults seize  
Her veins and all her yielding soul is love.

The summer, the child of the sun, from brightening fields of ether comes in pride of youth, attended by the sultry hours and ever fanning breezes. And one likes to hasten into the midwood shade where scarce a sunbeam wanders through the gloom, and on the dark green grass beside the brink of haunted stream. Now short is the doubtful empire of the night. The meek-eyed morn, the mother of dews, first appears, the day pours in apace and

opens all the lawny prospect wide. At noon the potent sun, flaming up the heavens, melts into limpid air the high raised clouds.

Then hail, in a blush of clustering roses, lost,  
 Dew dropping coolness to the shade retires,  
 There on the verdant turf on flowery bed  
 By gelid founts and careless rills to muse  
 While tyrant heart dispreading through the sky  
 His burning influence darts.

The daw, the rook, and magpie, direct their lazy flight to the grey grown oaks, which the calm village in their verdant arms sheltering embrace; and the house-dog and greyhound lies outstretched, sleepy dreaming. The fish are sportive, the gillain spider sits eagerly watching for flies, the drowsy shepherd lies reclined with half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade of willows grey. Later on the village swarms over the jovial mead. The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil, the ruddy maid, with all her kindled graces burning on her cheek, even stooping age is there they all spread the breathing harvest to the sun; and the blended voice of happy labour, love and social glee, wakes the breeze, and resounding, is heard from dale to dale. Around the brook a various group is caused by herds and flocks. On the grass some ruminating lie; others stand half in the flood; and often bending sip the circling surface. Then the soft hour for walking comes, when

Low walks the sun and broadens by degree  
 Just over the verge of day the shifting clouds

Assembled gay, a richly gorgeous train

In all their pomp, attend his setting throne. And

Confessed from yonder slow extinguished clouds

All ether softening, sober evening, takes

Her wonted station, in the middle air

A thousand shadows at her back.

A fresher gale begins to wave the wood and stir the stream, while the quail clamours for his running mate. At night among the crooked lanes and on every hedge, the glow-worm lights his gem and through the dark a moving radiance twinkles. And the thoughtful men spend the night in thinking philosophic thoughts.

Thomson describes *autumn* as nodding over the yellow plain, enlivened by a serene blue with golden light enlivened. Now the attempered sun rises sweet-beamed. Extensive harvests hang their heavy head. A calm of plenty prevails. Rent is now the fleecy mantle of the sky, the clouds fly different; the sudden sun, by its *effulgence* gilds the illumined field, and, black by fits the shadows sweep alone.

A gaily checkered heart expanding view  
Far as the circling eye can shoot around,  
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.

As the morn trembles over the sky the reapers stand before the ripened field, each by the lass he loves, in fair array. And through their cheerful band while work goes on, the rural talk, rural scandal and rural jest fly harmless. When the autumnal storm comes the stooping forest strained to its root, pours a rustling shower of untimely leaves. The mountains send a torrent down the vale; and through all the sea of harvest rolling round, the billowy plain floats wide. Sportsmen are busy, hunting rural game, the hare and the stag. At home the fueled chimney blazes wide, and the tankard foams. The mighty bowl, swelled high with fiery juice, steams liberal round a potent gale; earnest brimming bowls lave every soul, the table floating round, and pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot. The talk reels from theme to theme, from horse and hound, to church or mistress, politics or ghost, in endless mazes, intricate perplexed. Soon the feeble tongues, un-

the fire, the goblin story goes round, the rustic mirth and simple joke are indulged in, so is the loud laugh sincere, and the kiss, snatched hasty from the sidelong maid on purpose guardless or pretending sleep; and the leap, the slap, the haul, and dance and rural theatricals.

I am afraid I have not been able to do justice to Thomson in the above summary. But I can assure you that having gone over the whole of the poem line by line I have done my best to reconcile brevity with coherence, and both with appreciative selection. Of course you must read the whole poem yourself in order to get an exact idea of the general disposition of the theme and of the power of the poetic fancy of Thomson. But on the other hand there is an amount of extra matter in the poem which has really got nothing to do with the description of seasons. I suppose it should be easy to discriminate with regard to the merits and demerits of this poem. Speaking first about the demerits, I would say that, as observed in an earlier part of this paper, Thomson has offended against unity of sentiment which is the principal element of art. His digressions are often abrupt, discordant and inharmonious. They are evidently the result of a too conscious effort to make a display of learning and erudition. And the offence has been aggravated by a studiously systematic repetition of it in precisely the same manner in each of the four sections of the poem. Everywhere his philosophy is found obtruding on the reader's attention without much excuse, and the habit of sermonising at regular intervals, though good for a priest, is out of place in a poet. Let me give a few instances. In the first 85 lines of *Spring* there are hardly 10 lines to the point. The rest are taken up by a discourse on civilization, simply because the husbandman happens to be mentioned. In the next 500 lines or so, you have the effect of spring on different

aspects of Nature described and in these you have hardly 50 lines to the point. As soon as the effect on vegetables is mentioned, you have imposed on you a discourse on the merits of vegetarianism, its theory and a description of the cruelties of hunters etc. who destroy animals. As soon as the effects on animals are mentioned, you have a sermon on man and God's providence. The reference to love brings upon the reader the whole philosophy of love, the description of a lover, narration of the effects of jealousy on youth, the pleasures of chaste love of the married state, the delights from a rising offspring, a warning against false love and inducement and so on. In Summer, after the usual introduction, invocation, and dedication to the patron, you are acquainted with the benefits of early rising. Then you have an address to the sun and another to the parent of seasons in general. Then you have a lecture on natural history with special reference to the insects in summer. A mention of the summer heat leads the poet to describe Africa and its inhabitants, Nubia, the river Niger, the desert, Arabia, a typically tropical hurricane, the sharks, the plagues, the pestilential diseases, a thunder-storm, a piteous story about a storm, and so on, and the poem ends with a panegyric on Britain and her worthies, a discourse on the motion of planets and pedantic praise of philosophy. In autumn, the harvesting of ripe corn is of course an attractive feature : but from that you fly at a tangent to the praise of industry in general and benefits of society. Also you have a harvest storm described, and the inevitable story about it. The allusion to fogs in Autumn is of course natural, but surely there is no excuse for a digression from that into the question of the rise of fountains and rivers. The poem concludes in this case too with a panegyric on philosophical country life. So also in Winter, the snow being mentioned, the poet digresses

into a story of a man perishing in snow and from thence to reflections on the wants and miseries of human life. The winter in England should have certainly nothing to do with the wolves descending from the Alps and the Appenines or with a wintry night in the polar circle, and the poem concludes with moral reflections on a future state.

Another defect of Seasons is that the language is sometimes harsh and the diction, sometimes inharmonious, sometimes turgid and obscure. Also there is a kind of sameness or want of variety in the style.

But these defects are more than overbalanced by Thomson's merits. Pope is said to have remarked that descriptive poetry is a composition as absurd as a feast made up of sauces. But Thomson has proved that even a feast made up of pure sauces is enjoyable. And personally I think, the Seasons would have become even more enjoyable than it is, if it were free from some of those digressions which are *not* sauces. His landscape painting in words is exquisite. His ideas are clear and true, the result evidently of a careful first-hand observation of Nature in general and the particular scenes he has described. His descriptions of human actions—such as field sports, hunting, drinking, bathing, reaping, ploughing—so also his descriptions of nature scenes such as moon-light night, rainbows, water-falls, snow-frosts, thunders, rains and floods, etc., are beautiful and striking. His mastery of details is wonderful; and the reader for a time loses and vividly imagines himself to be actually transported to the scenes with the Muse hand in hand.

As for Kalīdas his style and diction in *ऋतुसंहार*, though graceful, is distinctly inferior to the same in some others of his poems such as *मेघदूत* and *रघुवंश*. It is also peculiarly barren of the beautiful and exquisitely true similes for which Kalīdas is so justly famous. The *ऋतुसंहार* I may,



class as a third rate poem among Kalidasa's own works. He always appears to give the descriptions from only one point of view from a cosy corner in a palace, as it were, in which the poet sits surrounded with the pleasures appropriate to every season, his body confined to a soft bed and cushions but his fancy soaring and active. No doubt, Kalidas here and there speaks of the beauties of the forest and the mountains, and Nature as seen outdoors. But a close perusal of his descriptions betrays the fact that his images and pictures are all more or less hereditary and conventional. Then again, it is a thing to be noted that everything in the hands of Kalidas is turned to love. Love is the dominating note in any tune that Kalidas may sing, and his works suffer by a sort of monotony in consequence. No doubt the standard authors in Sanskrit Rhetorics maintain that प्रेम or love is the most important among the रसाः or sentiments and some of them claim that the Shruti or the Vedas too are in favour of this doctrine because they say स एव एको रसः—the only true रस or sentiment is *that* viz. love and none else. But Kalidas practically gives love that excessive importance in his works which is justified neither by the universal judgment of men nor even by the better judgment of the critics of Sanskrit poetry itself. And this peculiarity of his is nowhere so pointedly manifested as in his Seasons. In his Locksley Hall Tennyson has sung that

In the spring a young man's fancy  
Lightly turns to thoughts of love.

But in the case of Kalidas his fancy turns to love in any season and rather too lightly. It may be spring, summer, autumn or winter—you will find Kalidas thinking of Love, Love and nothing but Love. And I am here reminded of a couplet which is to be found in the mouth of the temper-  
ance preacher—

Some drink because they are glad

And some because they are sad.

And what is drink to the intemperate drinker that is Love to Kalidas. He subordinates all the Rasas to Love and he can think of nothing else, be it spring, summer, autumn or winter.

It is believed that the man Kalidas was lewd and licentious, and that his excessive devotion to love in his poems is a reflection of his own mental condition. Thomson, too, according to Boswell and Johnson, was a much coarser man than his friends are willing to acknowledge—a man of great sensuality and licentiousness of manners. And Savage also confirms this opinion. He says — “He knows not any love but that of the sex, he was perhaps never in cold water in his life, and he indulges himself in all the luxury that comes within his reach.” But it must be said to Thomson’s credit that his poems are a pattern of rigorous purity and in this matter his *Seasons* afford a most favourable contrast to ऋतुसंडार. In his *Spring*, even Thomson adverts to the influence of that season upon the tender susceptibilities of mankind, but he does so only with exquisite delicacy and the resulting impression is pure and chaste (see lines 933-945 and 960-979).

It has been a pet fancy with me to compare the poetical treatment of identical or similar subjects, by authors in the two languages, English and Sanskrit. And though now the one and now the other have received the palm from my humble judgment, yet the comparison of their manners and merits has given me the same degree of interest on each occasion. The subject, as I first proposed it to myself, was ‘*The Seasons*’ by Kalidas and Thomson. In the present case, for various reasons I could not confine my consideration to only Kalidas and Thomson. It is true that no other poet in either language has made the treatment of

seasons the subject of a *substantive* poetic study. But true poetic excellence appears only where it listeth. And no lover of roses would refuse to gather them simply because they do not grow on the high road or at the appointed places.

As regards Sanskrit the Ritu Sanhara (ऋतुसंहार) of Kalidasa is of course the only piece where you get the description of all the seasons together, as a matter of set purpose. But nearly in every Mahakavya (महाकाव्य) you have a description of this or that season according to the propriety of the occasion. Thus in the *Ramayana* of Kalidasa in the third canto you have the season वसन्त or the spring described, in connection with the attempt made by the Gods to turn the mind of the greatest योगी and तापसी viz. शिव, from penance to love, with the purpose of having the loves of शिव and पार्वती fructify into an offspring that was destined to be the sole successful commander-in-chief of the army of the Gods in their wars with the demons. In the *Kirita-guniya* of भारवी you have in the fourth canto a description of autumn (शरदः) the occasion being that of the setting out of अर्जुन towards the Himalayas to do penance and win from शिव the great missile पाशुपतास्त्र. So also in the *Shishupala* by मातृ you find the whole of the sixth canto is devoted to a description, aforethought of all the six seasons. The occasion of course is that श्रीकृष्ण has started for हस्तिनापुर to witness and attend the great राजसूययज्ञ which धर्म had proposed to perform, where the great kings from all the parts of the world were to assemble, and where eventually a quarrel arose between कृष्ण and शिशुपाल, his great rival, and the latter was slain in a fight. In the sixth canto the poet supposes that श्रीकृष्ण—the arch-hedonist—after putting his forces in train on their march to हस्तिनापुर, felt inclined to enjoy a holiday before starting on serious business and on a long journey, and so we are asked to imagine that all the six seasons appeared simultaneously in the pleasure grounds of the mountain रिवतक.

for the benefit of their divine master. The commentator who is free from the poetic frenzy of the author, naturally feels inclined to anticipate and answer the objection that Nature does not admit of all the six seasons making their appearance together. And he explains that as श्रीकृष्ण was a God and the seasons were his servants, there could be no difficulty in their simultaneous appearance. The reason why you have a description of the seasons in all these महाकाव्याs is that a formal canon of poetics in Sanskrit requires that it should be so. ( *Ude साहित्यदर्पण* 559. ) In many other places also besides मुद्राराव्याs in the Sanskrit literature, you meet with short sketches or touches of the description of one or the other of the Seasons. Thus in वृत्तचरित, Act V, we have an excellent description of the rainy season, and in मुद्राराव्याs a short description of the autumn, which may be taken to stand as the original model in this matter. The rest are merely incidental and meagre and may not be taken into account for our present purpose.

Let us now turn to the English literature. It would be a mistake to suppose that Thomson, though he stands alone in making the Seasons a substantive subject of poetic study, is yet original in his choice of the theme for an exercise of his Muse. There is one kind of poetry in Latin viz., pastoral. Before Thomson wrote his Seasons, we have Pope, who in the 16th year of his age wrote his pastorals—Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter in 1709. A contemporary of Pope named Philips had written on the identical subject. And even before him had appeared in 1638, in two languages, Latin and English, *Kalendarium Humanæ Vitæ*—the calendar of Man's life by one Roberto Farlaeo, Scoto-Britanico. There was also the *Predium Rusticum* of the Jesuit Vaniere written in Latin hexameters and from which Thomson has actually quoted in

his Seasons. But in fairness it must be admitted that Thomson's Seasons is the epoch-making original, whence the modern descriptive poets have derived that more elegant and correct style of painting natural objects, which distinguished them from their immediate predecessors. The description of such natural objects as by their beauty, grandeur or novelty agreeably impress the imagination, has at all times been a principal and favourite occupation of poetry. But till the advent of Thomson it was thought that they could not legitimately constitute the whole or even the principal part of a capital piece. Pure description was supposed to be opposed to sense; and binding together wild flowers which grew obvious to sight and touch was deemed a trifling and unprofitable amusement. But Thomson's production was deemed so successful, when it appeared in one part after another that it changed the whole aspect of things in this matter.

I shall now briefly advert to the poetic sketches of different seasons which are to be found here and there in the English literature. Thus, there is a small poem by Spencer called 'The Procession of the Seasons' in which in four brief stanzas he gives beautiful pictures of the seasons. They are delightful reading because the poet's fancy is there found in powerfully concentrated form. There is a small poem of about 60 lines by Mrs. Heamans called the 'Voice of Spring.' Each line gives a distinct feature of the season and I doubt whether some readers may not be inclined to regard this short poem of Mrs. Heamans better than the 1400 lines of Thomson put together. In his 'Winter Walk at Noon' Cowper describes a phase of that season which is in contrast with the image which is usually raised before our mind's eye by its very name. Who has not read Keats's 'Ode to Autumn' in which, with a few simple touches, he exquisitely portrays

the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness ? There are also descriptions of Autumn by Chatterton and Southey, also a harmonious gingle on the same subject by Shelley. Coleridge has somewhere described the fields as they appear to a trained Naturalist in Autumn. And Tennyson has told us how in Autumn 'the air is damp and hushed and close as a sick man's room when he taketh repose an hour before death.'

But I cannot dwell on this subject any more. It must be apparent that what the poet gives, is only a generalisation about a season; and that sometimes the poet's season is not the same thing as the season we actually have. Thus the month of May you will find always associated with ideas of joy and enjoyment and you are apt to believe that May is always warm bright and beautiful. But no. The beautiful generalisations of the poet about May even in England, for instance, often look like a mockery of the keen east winds, the leafless trees, the hedges without a blossom, and late springs. One poet has described May thus. " Winter lingering chills the lap of May." May is not the same thing in Scotland as it is in England. One obscure poet Edwards has said that

Full strange it is but some we see  
Do make their May in June.

And it is true in more senses than one. Then again it must be observed that the association between the different seasons and the corresponding changes in the human mind which we often imagine is neither invariable nor universal. The mind is no doubt apt to be influenced by the phenomena of external nature. But as a Sanskrit poet has said,

मयिता मिथयति विधुरपित्तवितरति तथादिनंतियामिन्यः ।  
योमिनिर्वति दिनानि मुसदुःखवशीहृते मनसि ।

The mind has its own secret springs of gladness and sorrow, so much so that it has the power of making the sun cool and pleasant like the moon, and the moon as hot as the sun should be. It can turn the day into night and night into day.

But if there be one thing rather than another about the season which is realised as a universal truth in every age and every clime, it is the close parallel which is to be observed between the seasons of the year and the seasons of man's life. To use Thomson's words—

Behold fond Man !  
 See here thy pictured life.  
 Pass some few years  
 Thy flowering spring  
 Thy summer's ardent strength  
 Thy sober autumn fading into age,  
 And pale concluding winter comes at last  
 And shuts the scene !

### The Dramatic Art

The Kirloskar Dramatic Company, which has made its name a household word in the Deccan for the last twenty-five years, celebrated the Jubilee of the institution on Monday last in commemoration of its attaining the 26th year. The event will, we are sure recall the agreeable memory of the opening performance given by the Company in Poona when, at one bound, the founder and the inspiring genius of the Company, we mean the late lamented Anna Saheb Kirloskar, laid the foundation of his own fame and at the same time opened an endless vista of prospects for the dramatic art coupled with the sister art of singing. It was recognised at the time that

an epoch-making event had taken place in the world of the social amusements of the Deccan, and this characterisation of the event may be admitted to have abided even to this end of the quarter century. During this period while on the one hand a number of new stars made their appearance in the dramatic firmament, the institution of the Drama and particularly the Sangit Drama or the Opera has undergone a number of modifications and vicissitudes. The institution which Mr. Kirloskar founded has itself also changed hands so that naught but nearly the name now remains to connect the ruins and remnants of to-day with the imposing structure of 25 years ago. But the daring spirit of originality which brought the Kirloskar Company into existence still seems to hover unsubdued over the field in which a whole host of loyal imitators is yet following the track laid down for them by the late Annasaheb and gratefully doing homage to him as the pioneer captain of the new æsthetic industry. It is no wonder that the name of the man has been found to be one to conjure with, and in celebrating their 26th anniversary the Kirloskar Company indeed gave Poona and the Deccan an opportunity to rejuvenate with pleasure the romantic associations which have been almost indissolubly bound up in their mind with that artist and his art.

We do not think that this Jubilee affords us an occasion for doing anything more than briefly touching the subject of the Drama as an agency of popular education. And time has certainly arrived when a periodical revision of the popular verdict upon the Drama in its relation to the society may be made and its results put on record. The greater, we think, is the necessity for such revision and the inquiry which that revision implies, because whatever the popular estimate of its utility may be, its actual



success in recent times in nestling itself into the bosom of the populace cannot be denied. The Drama—as it is amongst you at present may be or may not be ideally good, but it has come to stay. Its actual condition, may at any time be entirely dependent upon your taste and culture; but the continuity of its existence as an institution amongst you now hardly depends upon your will. The Drama has already stolen a march upon you; and having occupied a fortified position in your fancy and taste, it will successfully resist any hostile attack made with the intent to dislodge it therefrom—though in a parley for amicable settlement it will be found to be most amenable to reason and in return for a formal acknowledgment of its supremacy will do any service to any good cause in which you may command it. And perhaps also it behoves you not to quarrel with the Drama as it is one of the most ancient institutions round which some of the best literary associations of the Indian mind are entwined. The desire for expression of thoughts in speech and gesture is common to every species of mankind; and imitation, which leads to assumption of character, is a habit which has been a second nature with every progressive people. As for music, decoration and dancing, they only represent so many departments of the same æsthetic sense of man. And what is Drama but the result of a suitable mixture of this fondness for imitation and assumption of character, and the passion for expression of sentiment with the aid of this music, decoration, and dancing? The Drama in India is moreover an indigenous institution and is also very ancient. The origin of the Indian Drama, says Prof. Ward, may unhesitatingly be described as purely native. “The Mahomedans when they overran India brought no Drama with them; the Persians, the Arabs and the Egyptians were without a national theatre. It would be ab-

surd to suppose the Indian Drama to have owed anything to the Chinese or its off-shoots. On the other hand there is no real evidence for assuming any influence of Greek examples upon the Indian Drama at any stage of its progress. Finally, it had passed into its decline before the dramatic literature had sprung into being." It is regarded as an art gathered from the Vedas and has undoubtedly a religio-literary origin. The claim of music to be treated as a 'celestial' entity remains undisputed to this day. The Sama Veda is Veda put to music, and the venerable Rishis of old were, we believe, hardly more inclined to treat it as a thing inconsistent with dignity than the professional singers of the newest generation in the twentieth century. There is more prejudice, we admit, against dancing, but those minds at least, which could conceive the God Shiva as not only investigating into its theory but actually making practical studies in the styles of execution, were certainly free from such prejudice. But dancing is always less of the essence of the Drama than the art of acting; and even the assumption of character and the art of acting has been a favourite Indian art from very early times. The actor is the indispensable interpreter of the dramatist, and though we may speak of such a thing as purely 'literary drama', still very few of the dramas written in Sanskrit, the old classical language of India, can be really regarded as intended to be only read and not acted. In fact the writing of such a work as the *Lasharnupika* cannot be explained except on the supposition that the art of acting was highly in vogue at the time. There is hardly a science, the art relating to the subject-matter of which was not for a long time before in practice on a large scale. The science of acting has been in India so elaborated that, according to some critics, it is like the scaffolding which is often even more extensive.

and elaborate than the edifice itself for the benefit of which it is erected. This over-elaboration is hardly inconsistent with the dimensions of the art of acting, which we independently find it had actually assumed. As for the literary aspect of the Drama, the ideal aimed at by Indian dramatists was ever as high as in any country. If Shakespeare had the advantage in point of characterisation of his heroes and heroines, Kalidas and Bhavbhuti, e. g., surpass any European drama-writer in point of the elegance of their style. "What are the qualities" asks the stage-manager in one of Bhavbhuti's dramas, "that are required in a Drama?" And the Sutradhar's reply is "Profound exposition of the various passions, pleasing interchange of mutual affection, loftiness of character, delicate expression of desire, a surprising story and an *elegant language*." From the point of view, says Professor Ward, of purely literary excellence, the Indian Drama holds its own against all except the very foremost of the Dramas of the world. And the general verdict of the same writer, who has made a close and comparative study of the dramatic literature of the nations of the world, on the Indian Drama as a whole may be gratefully reproduced in this connection. He says:—"The distinctive excellence of the Indian Drama is to be sought in the poetic robe which envelopes it as flowers overspread the bosom of the earth in the season of spring. In its nobler productions, at least, it is never untrue to its half religious, half rural origin. It weaves wreaths of idyllic fancies in an unbroken chain, adding to its favourite and familiar blossoms ever fresh beauties from an inexhaustible garden. Nor is it unequal to depicting the grander aspects of nature in her mighty forests and on the shores of the ocean. A profound familiarity with its native literature can here alone follow its diction through a ceaseless flow of phrase and

figure, listen with understanding to the hum of its bees as it hangs over the lotus and contemplate with Shakuntala's pious sympathy the creeper as it winds round the mango tree. The poetic beauty of the Indian drama reveals itself in the mysterious charm of its outline, if not in its full glow, even to the untrained."

The Indian Drama is, moreover, highly useful as recording the social history of the different periods to which the different compositions belong. Though not directly intended to serve that purpose it could not possibly help serving it. Thus Kalidas did not himself live in the times of the Rishis whose charmingly simple and rural life he has so beautifully depicted in Shakuntala. But living as he did nearly two thousand or at least fifteen hundred years nearer to the actual scenes of these rural idylls than we of the 20th century are, his descriptions must be regarded as being the truer by so far. The same must be said of his unconscious record of the customs and manners of the kings, their courts, and the society in general. Extending this reasoning to other writers as well we may generally say that their dramas are the necessary and useful complements of the scanty historical records that have been preserved of Indian history; and nothing could be conceived as a better method of inculcating the spirit or the wisdom of these *unconsciously historical* writings into the minds of the present generations than by giving actual performances of these dramas with the accompaniments of costume and scenery, which might be made by the use of a rational imagination to come up as far as possible to their real prototypes of centuries ago.

But the service which the Drama might be made to render by a judicious use of it to the living present and as an agency intended directly to reflect or create popular opinion upon subjects of current or contemporary history

is, in our opinion, of infinitely greater importance than the other service to which we referred above. And it is on this ground that the argument in favour of the Drama can be best clinched. Democracy, it is said, always brings its own weapons with it, and though in India the Drama cannot be said to be a new weapon, forged on the advent of Democracy, still there can be no doubt that Democracy has put it to a new use. The Drama in India even in its palmy days was intended more for the delectation of kings and noblemen. It was performed no doubt even on the occasion of great public festivals, but the true democratic spirit being then absent, the Drama could not, we think, have been enjoyed in its performance on the stage by the peer and the proletarian alike as it has become possible in modern times. The Drama has not evidently suffered by this change in the quality of its audience or spectators. On the other hand the circle of its admirers has been immensely enlarged as also its subjective scope or province. History shews that the Drama proved a useful handmaid to Democracy in Greece where the most genuine republic of the ancient times flourished. And later on too it was associated with all the more or less important manifestations of the democratic and the national spirit in every country in the east or west. The Athenian Comedy, says Rev. W. Lucas Collins in his introduction to his book on Aristophanes, was almost always more or less political and sometimes intensely personal, and always with some purpose more or less important underlying its wildest vagaries and coarsest buffooneries, it supplied the place of the political journal, the literary review, the popular caricature, and the party pamphlet of our own times. It combined the attractions of all these. It was an appeal to the audience—not only to the appreciation of wit and humour, but also to their sympathies social and political.

their passions and their prejudices..Fully to realise to ourselves what Greek intellect was in the best days of Athens and to understand how well that city deserved her claims to be the intellectual "eye of Greece" we should not appeal to the works of her great poets, her historians or her orators, which may be assumed to have depended for their appreciation upon the finer tastes of the few, we must turn to these comedies addressed directly to an audience in which, although those finer tastes were not so unrepresented, the verdict of what we should call the masses was essential to the author's success. But perhaps the theatre has a tendency everywhere to run towards the market place and the historian Green tells us that within about fifty years immediately previous to the advent of the puritan rule in England the intellectual quickening of the age, as manifested through the *drama*, had reached the masses of the people—"almost all the new play-writers were educated men and many were University men, but instead of *courtly singers* of the Sidney and Spencer sort we see the advent of the *poor scholar*." Surely the poor scholar did not primarily intend his plays for the Royal Court.

Germany, on the other hand, presents the instance of a country in which the Drama soon became a *national* institution. Schiller, the greatest German dramatist, advocated that a superior drama may powerfully though indirectly assist the laws of a nation for the support of social morality. And as for the service his own dramas rendered to the cause of German patriotism we may quote the following from Robert Harrison's "Outlines of German Literature":—"Thousands who trembled not when the earth groaned under the weight of the despot's mailed cavalry; men with fearless hearts who confronted the thunders of his artillery; thousands who fell to be mingled

with the ensanguined soil on so many battle-fields,—all carried with them into the struggle the enthusiasm kindled by Schiller's poetry. His songs were on their lips and his spirit fought along with them. And if the time come again when such sacrifices shall be demanded—for fatherland, for morals, for truth—the poetry of Schiller shall once more inspire us and his burning words shall be our battle cry. " The same is the case with Japan. Writing of the Japanese theatre some years ago, Prof. Ward had observed that the disabilities under which actors were labouring having been removed, it was not impossible that " the reign of progress in Japan may revolutionise an agency of civilisation which it seems to have for the present regarded as beneath its notice. " The prophecy has been duly fulfilled and from an article on the ' Japanese stage ' appearing in the *London Times* of 24th January 1906 from the pen of Mrs. Hugh Fraser we find that the histrionic art in the leading country of Asia has undergone a wonderful development during the last few years. The realistic drama has taken as firm a hold on the Japanese mind as the idealistic, and the passion of hero-worship, which is a key to the Japanese mind whether engrossed in pleasure or serious pursuits, has already installed and enshrined the latest national hero, Commander Hirose, who fell in the naval battle of Port Arthur in " the Valhalla where departed heroes become the demigods of after generations. " " Apart from its connection with illustrious names the classic Drama in Japan has the overwhelming strength of patriotism on its side. Its heroes and heroines bear names revered for centuries as those of martyrs to the love of country, the loyalty to a chief, the devotion of gallant hearts to all that is noble and chivalrous. Whether the play tells the story of some great general conquering his country's enemies, of some single-

hearted *Samurai* laying down his life for his lord, of a noble lady refusing for fear of distracting her lover from his duty the affection her heart is aching to accept, or as in the story of Masaoka of Sendai it be the nurse of a Prince sacrificing her own child's life in order to save his—the historical drama appeals constantly to the strongest passion of the Japanese mind—the pride of patriotism. "

As for India the Drama, having disappeared in the middle ages has once more emerged. It is remarkable that under the Hindu Kings of the more recent centuries no new dramas were written nor the old ones performed. And we may say that the revival of the Drama in the last fifty years was the result partly of the revival of literature being extended to this department along with others and partly to the growth of the new spirit of democracy among us. The future course of the Drama is not yet settled, and it shall be our own fault if we do not make it a national one by our efforts. We may say in passing, however, that there are chances of its being made national. For, whereas many dramas bearing on the social condition of the people are already written and are being acted, Shivaji and his doings have afforded material for, a number of others in the Deccan. Karan Vaghela has done the same for Gujraht and Pratapaditya for Bengal. The latest we hear about the last is that the Bengal Government has prohibited its performance; and this is a sure sign of the dramatic marksman having hit his mark.

## II

Before proceeding to enter on a discussion of the Marathi Drama or Theatre as it is, and of the practical remedies to purge it of its defects and improve its merits, we must apply our mind to a sort of a 'preliminary point,'



against the Theatre as an institution. This point relates to the prejudice, both undeserved or deserved, which is generally affected against the theatrical profession. It is said that this profession mainly makes for immorality and unrighteousness. We do not say that this indictment is altogether unjustifiable. On the contrary, ample evidence could be gathered in its support from the facts of the life history of a large number of wellknown professional actors in the Deccan. But having<sup>1</sup> said this we must also say that these facts far from justifying any indifference on our part to the Theatre, make it only obligatory on us to extend our reforming energies to and deal with it as a public institution which is bound to be as much liable to our censorship as it is entitled to our patronage. If the Theatre really be what it is supposed to be—a plague-spot, then surely there would be no wisdom in our leaving it alone to continue, unreformed or unscavenged, to carry on its work of demoralisation from day to day among the masses and the classes. Our neglect, our ostrich policy of shutting our own eyes to it, would be culpable in full proportion to the harm it may go on causing to the morals of the society. It would be a different thing if the Theatre were a merely passing epidemic and leaving no traces or foot-prints behind it. On the contrary, it must be admitted to be an institution that has, as we observed in our first article on the subject, come to stay; and our general indifference to, much more so our individual abstention from it, will not affect it in any appreciable manner. As observed by Mr. W. T. Stead of the *Review of Reviews* in his opening article on the 'First Impressions of the Theatre,' it is doubtful if the policy of mere abstention does not purchase the safety of the abstainer by permanently increasing the perils and mischiefs to which the non-abstainers are exposed. "Am I justified" he asks "in

saving my own soul alive by refusing to encounter a risk which, if I faced it, might make temptation less for others? If by abstention you could efface the Theatre from the world there might be something said for the adoption of such a course—on the assumption that the influence of the stage as it now exists is on the whole demoralising. But as no amount of abstention will have any other effect beyond that of throwing the whole control of the theatre into the hands of those who do not look at life from our stand-point, persistence in such a policy is not obviously justifiable." To the opponents of the Theatre it might be replied that there are other agencies in the society which can be really characterised as unrighteous and yet which do not give a hundredth part of the amusement and instruction which the Theatre gives. "The whole liberal education of our countrymen" says Macaulay "is conducted on the principle that no book which is valuable either by reason of the excellence of its style or by reason of the light which it throws on the history, policy and manners of nations, should be withheld from the student on account of its impurity." And what is true of the book is also true of the Theatre. It is true that if free from the wholesome checks arising from a vigilant censorship by the public the Theatre may lead the weak mind on to temptation and vice. But even then, as Goldsmith says, the virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarcely worth the sentinel! 'Cloister' virtue is never a stout or a healthy growth. Mrs. Benson, a leading English actress, has observed that "she never before heard that a Church choir were more moral than other folk; and if we wished one could quote as much immorality in the Church as in stage life but, I venture to state, not half the kindness, broad-mindedness and open hearted generosity." And slightly changing the words of Macaulay we may say that

in a world so full of temptations as this, any gentleman whose life would have been virtuous if he had not attended a theatre will not be made vicious by attending it. A man, who is exposed to all the influences of such a state of society as that in which we live and is yet afraid of exposing himself to the influences of the Theatre, acts much like 'the felon who begged the Sheriff to let him have an umbrella held over his head from the door of Newgate to the gallows because it was a drizzling morning and he was apt to catch cold.' The virtue which the world wants is a healthful virtue, not a valetudinarian virtue, which can expose itself to the risks inseparable from all spirited exertion, not a virtue which keeps out of the common air for fear of infection and eschews the common food as too stimulating. Puritanism is a good phrase but has no reality. It is an ideal but not a current coin. It is a good horse in the stable but an arrant jade on a journey, as Goldsmith says. History completely justifies the view that while the Drama has always been cherished as a legitimate mode of amusement, the puritanic efforts at its suppression have, as in England, always failed and resulted in a reaction in its favour. To quote Macaulay once more "The Puritan had affected formality, the comic poet laughed at decorum. The Puritan had laughed at innocent diversions; the comic poet took under his patronage the most flagitious excesses. The Puritan had canted; the comic poet blasphemed. The Puritan had made an affair of gallantry, felony without benefit of clergy; the comic poet represented it as an honourable distinction." But surely it can never be wise to deal with the Theatre in a puritanic spirit. And the ends of our own policy should be to take cognisance and possession, if possible, of the institution and while reforming it on the side of morality, to put it to the best account as a national asset.

It should be remembered, however, that the Theatre in India is even more free from some of the patent defects and more capable of the ideal improvements than the Theatre in the West. And first of all we may mention in this connection the sex-problem which is a stumbling block in the way of theatrical reform in the West. It is almost impossible to think of the European Theatre as dissociated from the class of actresses who, by their immorality, stamp their profession with an unenviable character. It is this factor in the situation which is responsible for much of the notoriety which has attached to the theatrical profession since the times of the Roman Empire. When Constantine suppressed the Theatre, the art of acting had become "the pander of the lewd or the frivolous itch of the eye or the ear, and the Theatre had contributed its utmost to the demoralisation of the world." This was, apart from a degenerated taste, due to the mixing of the men and women together on the stage and in the green room. But in England this difficult sex-problem is being solved not of course by the elimination of women as actresses but by public opinion being brought upon the profession and improving its morals. The attempt has so far succeeded that an actress does not now mean necessarily a vicious woman. A question raised as to the morality of the classes of actresses is now resented as "lacking in chivalry and devotional reverence for womanhood." Mr. Sydeny Grundy thinks that "no moral census can do justice to the stage. Many a woman cast out by virtue and society has found an honest and more happy life upon the boards." Mr. Bernard Shaw, a famous English playwright, conveying his sentiments to Mr. Stead and ridiculing the contention that the Theatre kindles up evil passions, says:—"If you had been taken to the pantomime when you were six and thereafter regularly every year, you would have com-

pounded for all later temptations in your childhood by a perfectly innocent adoration of the fairy-queen and would have been as proof at twenty-one against the leading lady's make-up as you are now against the blandishments of a lady journalist." And speaking generally he says—"A Theatre is a potent engine for working up the passions and the imagination of mankind and like all such engines it is capable of the noblest recreations or the basest debauchery according to the spirit of its direction. But so is a church. A Church can do great things by precisely the same arts as those used in a Theatre, but every Church is in a state of frightful pecuniary dependence on Pharisees who use it to whitewash the most sordid commercial scoundralism by external observances. It sometimes, under cover of the text that God is love, creates and maintains a pseudo-pious ecstatic communion compared to which the atmosphere of the Theatre is prosaically chilly." Also contending that the Theatre is certainly not more immoral than many other walks of life, or the generality of men and women making up a society, he makes these remarks:—"Don't talk about immoral actresses. What do you mean, you foolish William Stead, by an immoral actress? I will take you into any Church you like and shew you gross women who are visibly gorged with every kind of excess, with coarse voices and bloated features to whom money means unrestrained gluttony and marriage unrestrained sensuality, but against whose characters, whose purity as you call it, neither you nor their pastors dare level a rebuke. And I will take you to the Theatre and show you women whose work requires a constant physical training, an unblunted nervous sensibility, and a fastidious refinement and self-control which one week of ordinary plutonic feeding and self-indulgence would wreck, and who only fulfil these requirements. And yet when you

learn that they do not allow their personal relations to be regulated by your gratuitously unnatural and vicious marriage laws you will not hesitate to call them immoral. The truth is that if the average British matron could be made half as delicate about her sexual relations or half as abstemious in her habits as the average stage heroine, there would be an enormous improvement in our national manners and morals. When you sit in the stalls, think of this; and as the curtain rises and your eyes turn from the stifling grove of fat naked shoulders round you to the decent and refined lady on the stage, humble your bump-tious spirit." This may be regarded as interested testimony as coming from an author. But we may quote, in concluding this part of the subject, the testimony of the Rev. R. J. Campbell which is extremely rational and unbiased. He says :—"The rage for amusement is excessive. But that is no reason why one particular form of amusement should be placed under a ban. My theory which accords with my practice has been to discriminate between the various forms of the theatrical entertainments provided for the public and sparingly to attend to such performances as seem to be good. I go, for instance, to see every new piece which my friend Beerbloom Tree puts on the stage. I have done so for a year or two and have never seen in his Theatre anything on the stage or off it that was out of harmony with the atmosphere of the Chirstian home.....The dramatic instinct is innate in man. It is an integral part of human nature. Hence I cannot think it is right to try to deprive it of any mode of expression. But that it can be abused is no reason why it should not be used. The Puritan boycott of the stage was a natural reaction against the license of the Theatre. But these reactions are apt to carry men too far; and human nature will always assert itself in the end. Hence I can

give the Theatre a discriminating support and be moderate in all things. "

### III

From the ample quotations in our article it will be apparent that the theatrical profession in England, where it is compromised a good deal by the difficulty of the sex-problem, stands just at this time much higher in repute than it was in the Roman Empire under Hadrian or in England after the Restoration. That even spiritually inclined poets like Tennyson should write dramas to be performed on the stage and that professional actors like Sir Henry Irving should command national respect are signs of the times which are not yet very distant in the past ; and the spirit of those times still seems to dominate the British nation in the new century. As regards France, Prof. Ward has observed that the Theatre will not probably lose the hold it possesses over the intellectual and moral sympathy of the whole of the educated and a great part of the uneducated population of France. " So long as the French nation will continue to maintain its ascendancy over other nations in much that adorns and brightens social life, the predominance of the French Theatre over the Theatres of other nations is likewise assured." As for Germany its stage was in the beginning of the eighteenth century in a most gloomy condition. But thanks to the efforts of men like Lessing, Goethe, Schiller and others it gradually improved, and towards the end of the nineteenth century it could be said that " upon the whole the efforts of the German Theatre were on a level with the demands of the national culture and in harmony with the breadth and variety of national intelligence. All these facts point to a universal emergence of the Theatre from disrepute into public regard. By far the greatest and the best portion of the poetry of every nation will be

found to be imbedded in the Drama, and it would be simply ungrateful on the part of those who are benefitted by this poetry to allow the class of the interpreters of Dramatic Poetry to remain in neglect and in disrepute. With reference to India it deserves to be remembered that while the sex-problem, which makes the reform of the Theatre difficult in Europe, is altogether absent in India, the traditions of the theatrical profession have been far more creditable and reputable than those of the profession anywhere else. In England even at the time of Shakespeare the theatrical profession was put, as it were, on the same level as any noxious trade and required a 'license' to be put on a footing of even that degree of respectability which attaches to men of the Royal retinue. The players at the Globe and Blackfriars theatres were in the time of James I ( 1603 ) called King's Servants—which title they obtained after a license had been granted to them—and were, like servants of the royal household, sworn into office, each being allowed ' four yard of bastard scarlet ' for a cloak and quarter of a yard of velvet for a cap every second year. ' Mark on the other hand the comparatively respectable character of the theatrical profession in India. Professor Wilson in his introduction to the 'Hindu Theatre' says—"Companies of actors in India must have been common at an early date and must have been reputable, for the actors often refer to the poets as their personal friends, and an act of tolerable merit in India under the ancient regime was to be the friend and associate of sages and Kings. The Hindu actors were never apparently classed with vagabonds or menials and were never reduced to contemplate a badge of servitude as a mark of distinction." That being the case we fail to see why these traditions of respectability should not be revived and why, under the supervision of the cultured cen-



sorship of the educated classes of the nation, the profession should not be made accessory to the working of the national spirit and to the expression of the catholic sympathies, intellectual as well as moral, with which the new generations are undoubtedly imbued. With the permanent elimination of women as actresses from the Theatre and with a larger association of the educated classes with the theatrical profession, so that the tastes, the ideals and the morals of the former may dominate over the latter, it is highly practicable to carry the above object into effect.

The present time is, moreover, singularly opportune for a general reform of the Marathi Theatre in the Deccan on all lines. And the most important thing to be remembered in this connection is that while on the one hand the Marathi stage is practically freed from the narrow restrictions of the orthodox science of Histrionics, on the other hand an inexhaustible treasure of new ideas and ideals has been laid open to it through its introduction to the English literature. We shall thus be enabled to combine the advantages of the western as well as the eastern art, science, and literature, relating to the Drama, the stage and the theatre. And our gains in this respect should be apparently limited only by the capacity of the rising generations of the educated classes to profit by the exceptional opportunities afforded to them and, while improving their own heritage, to make the best of the western material their own. The freedom from the restrictions of the orthodox science of Histrionics has been obtained by us almost unconsciously, and without even anything like a protest being provoked against it. The science of dramatic criticism in India was, there is reason to suppose, evolved in its most complete form after the art of theatrical composition had passed its zenith and decay had set in. The canons of orthodox criticism were observed almost more in the breach than in

the observance. This is an inevitable result when mere 'criticism usurps the authority of creation ; when plays give way to theories and system-mongers take the place of dramatists and poets ' In fact we actually find that hardly enough pieces of dramatic composition exist for a convincing illustration each of every one of these canons or precepts of criticism by actual quotation from well-known and recognised works. The departure from these canons, which was noticeable even in the palmy days of the Sanskrit dramatic genius, has been still more noticeable during the last quarter century of the revival of literature in the Deccan and, as we said above, even without a protest from the public. The creative poets of the new generation have introduced and brought into vogue kinds of dramatic compositions which are guided more by the new fashion or taste than by a loyal adherence to the rules of criticism stored in the *Dasharupaka*, the *Saraswata-kanthabharan* and similar other works. It may be stated, however, that the new generation, while not prepared to swear exclusive homage and fealty to these orthodox authorities, are not animated by a needlessly irreverent or antagonistic spirit to them. They are not prepared to lose the benefit of the critical ideas and ideals evolved by the orthodox critics, and they not unoften observe their canons where it would result in embellishing their work with ornament or even serve as an aid to the prevention of gross faults, such as may jar on the sentiment of the reader or the audience, being committed. Thus to specify, we may say that while the new generation of dramatic poets do not strictly adhere to the canons governing the form of a drama, or its construction in a particular number of acts, &c., or the conduct of the plot, or the peculiarities of the kinds of heroes, heroines and other characters prescribed in relation to the form of the piece, they generally

adhere to the principles governing the use of *Rasas* or sentiments or 'flavours' &c. On the other hand, they feel free to make use of the newest arts, invented or brought into prominence by the dramatic writers of the West, to make their compositions and the performances of these compositions on the stages vivid, effective and agreeable and thus more capable of fulfilling their purpose. A similar advantage may also be seen in the matter of the material to be exhibited on the stage. Thus while we have the undisputed use or monopoly of our own precious heritage of works such as those of Shudraka, Kalidas, Bhavabhuti, Vishakhadatta, Bhatta Narayan, Ban and others, we have also on the other hand a free access to the dramatic writers of other nations such as Shakespeare, Moliere, Racine, Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Victor Hugo, Sheridan, Goldsmith, and a host of others too numerous to mention. What we, therefore, want at present is dramatic poets, both creative and imitative, who will bring into being a library of standard dramatic works, mainly intended for the stage, and calculated both in the idealistic as well as realistic garb to produce a literary and histrionic atmosphere conducive to the reforms of our manners and customs, to the emphatic and impressive enunciation of the best ideals in morals, and the creation and the fostering of a noble spirit of nationality among our society. It is by these means that the Theatre will be able to take a noble revenge upon the society which, while using the Theatre whenever needed as a source of amusement, ungratefully maintains the ban of an affected displeasure against it for the rest of the time.

(Feb. and March 1906)

## A New Theatre for Poona

The Poona public are certainly to be congratulated upon the addition made by the Kirloskar Sangit Theatre to their public buildings. There is no more sure index of the activity, the public spirit and the taste of a society than the public buildings of a city; and the Kirloskar Sangit Theatre is—thanks to the enterprising spirit of Mr. Shankar Bapuji Muzumdar, the energetic Secretary of the Kirloskar Mandali—calculated to do credit to the Poona society from the point of view of every one of these. The new Theatre is, as will be seen from the name it bears, intended to be a memorial to the late Mr. Anna Kirloskar, the founder in fact of the new school of the Marathi Drama which dates from the year 1880. The Kirloskar Sangit Company, which was the means by which this new school was inaugurated and has been successfully maintained to this day in a progressive and prosperous condition, is now almost a public institution. And the construction of the new Theatre, mainly out of the funds and solely owing to the initiative of the Company, may reasonably be hoped to give hostages to good fortune, upon whose propitiousness, for one thing, depends the permanence of all human institutions.

But apart from the service which it may render to the career of the Kirloskar Company or the memory of its founder, the new Theatre will be of immense service to the cause of the Drama in general. A theatre is the place where Dramas are performed and it hardly needs argument to prove that there must be a vital connection between the quality of this place and the *effect* of the performance. It is perfectly true that neither the *merits* of a dramatic piece nor those of its actors depend in a great measure upon the quality of the building in which a dramatic

performance is given. We know that Shakespeare's plays which have always been the delight of the world, were being performed in his own time in what may be regarded at this date as mere fourth rate theatres. How even his own contemporaries regarded the Blackfriars theatre may be seen from a contemporary sermon by a certain priest, John Stockwood, who says, "I know not how I might more discommend the playing place *erected in the fields* than to term it, as they are pleased to have it called, a *Theatre*." In the same manner the art of Garrick and Macready never felt hampered or was the less appreciated because the surroundings were not as artistic as their own acting. In our own country too the histrionic art flourished and made its mark at a time when no such thing as a theatre existed or was dreamt of. But on the other hand no one will deny that the effect of even Shakespeare's and Kalidas's dramas and Garrick's acting would have been far enhanced if they had the benefit of such equipment and surroundings as have been made possible by the advancement of science and the development of the fine arts in modern times. The *merit* of an art is something very different from the effect which it may produce; and even an appreciative connoisseur will feel grateful for those embellishments which both set out and deepen the effect of the art. The real purpose of every art is to create a sweet illusion in which the Soul would like to lose itself for the time being; and no art can afford to dispense with the aid which science or civilisation is likely to give in that respect.

The history of the Drama has been in one way the history of the stage and the theatre. Both in the East and in the West, Churches and Temples served at one time as public play-houses. 'Pulpit' in fact is the original word for a theatre! In India dramas were in ancient times performed as an integral part of religious festivals. They

were light-hearted supplements to the addresses and discourses of learned divines, were welcome as a suitable relaxation at the end of a period of serious pursuit, and were participated in by all classes of people. The *Lalit e. g.* was a peculiar kind of play, melodramatic in form, in which the religious lecturer condescended, at the end of his series of *Kir'ans*, to a display of his ingenuity and humour, by dramatic recitations, representations, and other scenes, conceived and executed in a light vein. It was a time for whoever that had any histrionic talent to indulge in it; and the court-yards of temples, the patent public places known to antiquity, resounded with the screams of painted demons, and the laughter of the hilarious public enjoying the wit and the humour of talented buffoons. The stage and the auditorium were then as little differentiated as the actors and the spectators. And the crude setting of the surroundings and equipment was in perfect harmony with the unrefined exhibitions given by the improvised amateur actors. In England too till the year 1570, when the first public theatre was erected, the dramatic performances, which consisted merely of *Mysteries* and *Moralities*, were presented in churches. It was only when religious subjects gave place to profane subjects and pieces of mere amusement that dramas came to be performed in the Halls of Universities and Inns of Court, the palaces of Royalty, and the mansions of the Nobility. But the use of places like these could be only an occasional indulgence, and for the benefit of the common people dramatic performances were soon transferred to temporary erections made in the courtyards of inns.

Our readers would probably feel interested to be told what a theatre was like in England in the time *e. g.* of Shakespeare. It was, when not a temporary erection, a small circular building made of brick, with or without a

roof and often only with a thatched roof. In the middle of the theatre, there was usually an open area where the common people stood to see the exhibition, from which circumstance Shakespeare nicknames them as 'groundlings.' The stage was separated from the audience only by pales and was strewn with rushes. The curtains opened in the middle and were drawn backwards and forwards on an iron rod. Towards the rear of the stage was a balcony or upper stage about 8 or 9 feet from the ground. At each end of it was a box sometimes called the private box. People sat in this balcony, and a curtain being hung across the stage, the performers entered between the curtain and the real audience, and when it was drawn, began their performances, addressing themselves to the balcony with their backs to the spectators in the theatre. The stage was lighted by candle lights or large open lanterns. It was Garrick, it is said, who first introduced the modern system of lighting the scenery by lamps invisible to the audience. There was very little of furniture by way of stage equipment or decoration; and much was left to the imagination. Sir Philip Sydney describing the state of the stage in his time says.—"Now you shall have three ladies walk to gather flowers and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By and by we hear news of shipwreck in the same place and then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock." There was no scenery but only crude machinery serving certain purposes. The want of scenery was supplied by writing the names of different places of action on boards which were placed so as to be visible to the audience! Would not the above description nearly apply to the inside of any so-called theatre in India till a few decades ago? Every other thing was in proportion to this poor show. The price of admission to the best boxes was a shilling a head, pit seats six or four pence.

Dramatic poets were given free passes as a privilege. About twenty pounds was regarded as a considerable receipt for a full house at the Globe or the Blackfriars Theatre. About six pounds seems to have been the usual price of the copy-right of a play in Shakespeare's time. A printed play was sold for six pence, and the usual present of a portion for dedication was forty shillings. A word about the audience will not be out of place. The audience was a medley of humanity. They came determined to enjoy if not to appreciate a play. Before the performance commenced, and between the acts, they amused themselves in various ways, reading, playing at cards, drinking ale and smoking tobacco. Refreshments were supplied by hawkers who cried their articles with as much vociferation as modern pedlars. The superior spectators were allowed to sit on the stage. Here, it is said, the fastidious critic was usually to be met with, the wit ambitious of distinction, and the gallant studious of the display of his apron on his person. Either seated or else reclining on the rushes on the floor they regaled themselves with pipe and tobacco which their attendant pages furnished. The felicity of their situation, however, excited envy and the affectations and impertinence disgust, among the less polished part of the audience who frequently vented their spleen in hissing, hooting and throwing dirt at the intruders on the stage. The players too were sometimes the victims of their spleen !



Drama as well as its performance. The actor in the Drama of the Elizabethan period in England or the Indian Drama thirty years ago, was almost a member among the crowd of spectators. He stood forth among them, and addressed them as if he was an orator rather than an actor. Hence the Drama was necessarily more rhetorical than dialogic. Even when there was a dialogue each successive passage therein was not so much the link between what preceded and followed, it was a new topic which the speakers were expected to exhaust between them. The scene in itself, the scene of the moment was everything; the logical nexus of the scenes nothing or next to nothing. On the other hand the stage has since gravitated more and more to the circumference of the theatre and at last been so completely detached from the audience that the actor is now a figure set in perspective in a framed picture; he now never addresses the audience except when he is a blockhead or a fool and does not know his art; and any two good actors can now conveniently show themselves so absorbed and so utterly oblivious of the audience that, even when their conversation is really meant for the audience, the pretence is artistically kept up that they are only being overheard! The rhetorical drama was, in the language of mathematics, but a function of the platform-stage which formerly projected right into the audience, and with which may be contrasted the present picture stage, or the illusion-stage.

An up-to-date western theatre now costs even lakhs of rupees; and the business of the scenery has been so elaborated that the fitting up of a new play often costs so much as 20 or 25 thousand pounds. And no wonder. For the equipment of a theatre has to bring into requisition the best art of the architect, the sculptor and the painter. The business of this equipment has come to be so much

specialised that it may be regarded as elevated to the status of a science by itself. And what with beautiful tapestry, artistic wings, revolving or turnable boards, lifted floors, subterranean chasms, trap doors, scene-slides vapour curtains, coloured lights, thunder machines, iron rattles, tumble box, raining and snowing machines, the stage mechanic is prepared to produce every realistic effect desired by the play-wright so much so that critics with a good taste have begun to entertain a fear that in course of time the excessive attention paid to scenery may ruin the true art of acting. The Parsee and Gujrathi dramatic companies of Bombay are far ahead of the Deccan companies in the matter of the art of stage equipment; but it is a matter for satisfaction that the Marathi companies too are gradually coming up in that respect. The Kirloskar Company are the first among the companies in the Deccan to have a first class theatre of their own; and it is to be hoped that it will also maintain the lead in every other respect as the premier dramatic institution.

### Wit and Humour

Democracy, it is said, has its own methods as well as its own ideals; and one of the favourite methods of Democracy for inculcating and propogating Truth is, according to a principle laid down by Horace, through a laugh — "*Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat*."\* In the bygone ages when the genius of monarchy or oligarchy prevailed, the gulf between superiors and inferiors was always too wide to be covered by social commerce, and the beautiful plant

\* "What forbids one to say what is true in a laughing manner?"

of laughter never thrives except under the genial atmosphere of social equality. The taste for laughter has, however, been natural to mankind, and laughter 'checked and chid' in open social commerce by affection, had its own revenge on the party in the wrong. It was impossible that the king should enjoy a laugh openly lest his superior position and dignity might suffer; but when left to himself he could not do without his own fool or jester to while away or make merry the heavy hours of idleness or even to satisfy a real craving for those pleasures which lightness of spirit or playfulness of mind alone can give. But the pleasure so enjoyed cannot be of a genuine quality and one of the drawbacks of a king's position that have always made it unenviable is that he is unable to have as many opportunities for laughing that genuine, that healthy laugh which has been the poor man's salt of life since the beginning of the world.

The advancing spirit of Democracy however, has changed all this. Healthy laughter has always been the rich dower of Democracy and the invariable concomitance of the two has been seen to hold good as much in the ages before Christ was born, as in the twentieth century. Mark Twain is surely no more characteristic of the greatest and the most successful Democracy of the present age, we mean the United States of America, than Aristophanes was of the first successful Democracy in the history of mankind, viz. that in Greece. The value of Mark Twain's humorous writings as a vehicle of instruction is too well recognised to need any description or argument; and as for Aristophanes's comedies, Rev. Lucas Collins, a contributor to the 'Ancient Classics for English Readers' series, tells us in his book on the great Grecian satirist that they being almost always more or less political "supplied the place of the political journal, the literary review, the popular

caricature and the party pamphlet of our own times.... The Paris 'Charivari' and the London 'Punch' in their best days had perhaps more of the tone of Aristophanes about them than any other modern literary production.' The service of Democracy to laughter lies in this that it has brought the latter in the market place and got it legitimized by the public. In the ages of monarchy and oligarchy, laughter was looked upon with scorn as if it were a bastard, not fit to be openly exhibited or owned. Under the auspices of democracy it has been identified, and recognised as being born in lawful wedlock between its parents, the serious and the sublime on the one hand and its negative partner and complement, the comic or the humorous on the other, and the child is to be seen not only owned but caressed and kissed in public. Witty and humorous writings have been raised to the status and assumed the dimensions of a distinct department in literature, and it is regarded as an extremely rare accomplishment in a public man to be able to deliver witty and humorous speeches in a happy style. The service of laughter to democracy, on the other hand, has been gratefully meritorious. For it has, more than any other agency, succeeded in rounding off the angularities of character, in levelling up assumed and artificial barriers of position and facilitating the realisation of the doctrinal equality of men, so far at least as that could be done by the proof of a common susceptibility to and common enjoyment of the pleasure, of the perception of a particular class of relations between the world of things. Laughter, when enjoyed in common, is the most potent instrument of creating sympathy, and the transmission of the qualities of heart from one man to another. Those who have had occasions to address public meetings of a mixed character must have found out by experience that it is much easier to produce

a laugh, so that all may heartily join in it, than to produce a serious or heavy sentiment in which all may equally share; and, moreover, the speaker who can, in the course of his address or discourse get his audience once or twice to heartily laugh with him, or better still without him, need not look for any other guarantee that his words will carry conviction far more effectually than any quantity of the confectionary of solemn rhetoric. A peal of rollicking laughter raised by a speaker in a debate ought, as things go, to strike even greater in the heart of his adversary than sighs or tears which, moreover, are extremely difficult to be conjured up.

To speak of humour, which is only one among many causes of laughter, it is difficult to take objection to the claim made on its behalf by one who is one of the most successful humorists of this age, we mean Max O'rell. He says—"Humour is much more than the divine saving grace it is often called. It is the greatest power on earth and the greatest power for good too. It is the most effective stimulant to cheerfulness and, therefore, happiness. It is the outcome of the philosophy and simplicity in character. It is the antidote to conceit. It is the quintessence of common sense and it is to be regretted that Governments of the world are not carried on by humorists. They would prevent nations from making fools of themselves. They would not only see the horror of war but the ridicule of it. They would teach people to understand that the way to teach them how to live is not to kill them. They would stop the swaggering of idiotic and so called patriotism and replace it by good fellowship. They would change flags from rags used to excite nations to the hatred of one another into emblems of brotherhood and good understanding." Lord Rosebury, I remember, had two years ago maintained in one of his speeches that the cabi-

nets of the world's nations had much better be made of merchants than politicians. Considering that his lordship is a good statesman and a better humorist than merchant, we think he will not demur to Mr. Max O'rell's proposition if put to him for acceptance, the proposition that the governments of the world had better be made of humorists.

Equally well recognised is the value of laughter in individual or private life. 'Laugh and be fat' is an oft repeated maxim, and though it would be unreasonable to seek to trace obesity in every case to this cause, still Falstaff who was "about a yard and more" at the waist could have plausibly enough claimed that it was all due to his love of laughter more than anything else. The Italian proverb that "Laughter makes good blood" is as much true in the literal as in the metaphorical sense, and most men add, by laughing heartily, fragments to their life without being conscious of it. Physicians, from times immemorial, have recognised laughter as a healthy physical exercise, in as much as it supplements the energetic respiratory action by movements of the limbs and a better circulation and oxidation of the blood. As for its mental effects it would be almost impossible to do full justice to the abundance of testimony which prevails in favour of laughter. Tennyson has said that a good laugh is a sunshine in a house. But perhaps no one has spoken more emphatically on the subject than Mr. Carlyle whose opinion deserves special weight because he was generally regarded as taciturn, cynical and incapable of a hearty laugh, judging of course by his physiognomy. Speaking negatively he says that "the man who cannot laugh is not only fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils but his own life is already a treason and a stratagem." In another place he says that "no man who has once wholly and heartily laughed be altogether irreclaimably bad." According to Thackeray,

people who do not know how to laugh are always pompous and self-conceited and "a good laugh will sweep away more cob-webs than all the logic in the world," says Alexander Stuart. No doubt the scripture pronounces a "blessing on the weeper and a woe on the laugher," but here as in many other cases of scripture texts, the interpretation and not the teaching is really at fault. And Archdeacon Hare has explained the text by saying that "they who weep are declared to be blessed not because they weep but because *they shall laugh*, and the woe threatened to the laughers is in like manner that they shall mourn and weep."

It is, in our opinion, needless ever to seriously set about specifying or emphasising the limits within which laughter or humour, or mirth is enjoyable without being injurious. Most of us have almost an instinctive sense as to these limits. Even of a good thing one ought not to have too much; and laughter, we know is not the food but the salt of life. The human life is not made for being frittered away in frivolities, and a causeless laughter is as much to be dreaded and avoided as one that proceeds from anything but downright good nature and beneficence.

So also the laugh that is an outward expression for mere scoffing or sneering is but a grin which even beasts can grin; and not the true genuine laugh that man alone is capable of and endowed with. But within these limitations, laughter is not only legitimate but can be recommended as possessing a positive virtue, useful to the physical, intellectual and moral wellbeing of mankind.

It may be admitted at once that the germ of laughter lies in disproportion or incongruity or the combination of the sublime and serious with its opposite. But incongruity is not in itself a thing to be despised. It is only one of the

many relations in which things stand to one another, and so long as incongruity is not tainted with pain, haughtiness or disdain or moral disgust, it is as legitimate, allowable and enjoyable an exercise of the mind to perceive the relation of incongruity or disproportion, as to perceive the opposite relation of congruity or proportion. To condemn all dealing with incongruity as bad is only as reasonable as to argue that a man must be proud and scornful because he sees that there is such a thing as sin or such a thing as folly in the world. As Emerson has said, no one would be so foolish as to refuse to have anything to do with ink for fear that he may fall in the inkpot. Similarly our mind may safely deal with incongruity or ridiculousness of things without ourselves being ridiculous. As Archdeacon Hare has put it in his essay on mirth, 'the perception of incongruity may exist and may awaken laughter without the slightest reprobation of the object laughed at. We laugh at a pun surely without a shade of contempt either for the words punned upon or for the punster, and if a very bad pun be the next best thing to a very good one this is not from its flattering any feeling of superiority in us but because the incongruity is broader and more glaring. Nor when we laugh at a droll combination of imagery do we feel any contempt but often admiration at the ingenuity shown in it, and an almost affectionate thankfulness towards the person by whom we have been accused such as is rarely excited by any other display of intellectual power as those who have even enjoyed the delight will bear witness.' There is thus not the smallest excuse for those who affect to be too much pressed down by the weight of life to afford to be light-spirited even for a moment. Nor is there reason for supposing that wisdom must be dissociated from laughter or mirth. To quote the same author once more—"There is a large class of people who



deem the business of life far too weighty and momentous to be made light of, who would leave merriment to children and laughter to idiots and who hold that a joke would be as much out of place on their lips as on a grave stone or in a ledger. Wit and wisdom being sisters, not only are they afraid of being indicted for bigamy, were they to wed them both, but they shudder at such a union as incestuous. So to keep clear of temptation and to preserve their faith where they have plighted it, they turn the younger out of doors and if they see or hear of anybody taking her in they are positive he can know nothing of the elder. They would not be witty for the world. Now to escape being so, it is not very difficult for them whom nature has so favoured that wit with them is always at zero or below it. Or as to their wisdom since they are careful never to overfeed her she jogs leisurely along the turnpike road with lank and meagre carcass, displaying all her bones and never getting out of her own dust. She feels no inclination to be frisky but if a coach or a wagon passes her, is glad, like her rider, to run behind a thing so big." All this is of course quaintly expressed but certainly not without undeserved severity or harshness. For in fact, wit, humour or mirth never really prove an obstacle to the currency of truth; why, these prove, if anything, such a valuable aid on the contrary that no one who can successfully raise a laugh will ever be loth to raise it; and speaking generally we may assert that the use of laughter as a vehicle of truth is limited only by the capacity of men to raise it. Many a sermon, says Max O'rell, would be remembered if the preacher had not sent his hearers to sleep by his prosy delivery but had kept them cheerful and attentive by the introduction of a little wholesome humour.

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## Indian Journalism in the Nineteenth Century

Journalism is as much an exotic in India as the Railway, the Telegraph or the Representative Government. It is useless to speculate whether, if native rule had continued to this day with the new kind of civilisation growing around it, journalism would or would not have found its way into India, though the probability seems rather to point the latter way. Not that there is no good soil in the intellect of this country for the seed of journalism to germinate, but the political atmosphere till the nineteenth century was not congenial enough for the plant to thrive. Even at present, with the British rule encircling them, the Native States are reluctant to tolerate the newspaper press. The Princes dislike it and the Political Agents foster the dislike. We do not, however, mean to say that the people were, or are less happy under Native rule for want of journalism. Far from it. We know it is quite possible for a free nation to live and prosper without newspapers, just as it can live without many other things which bear the hallmark of the 19th century civilisation. The England of Elizabeth without the Railways was certainly not more glorious than the Maharashtra of the Peshwas without newspapers. But as an accompaniment of the British rule to which we are subjected and of the entirely new order of things brought in its train, it is impossible not to appreciate the usefulness of journalism—the new agency of political education.

The printing type was first introduced into India in the late sixties of the eighteenth century. But from that to the dawn of Indian journalism was a long way off. The pioneers of journalism in India were foreign adventurers who, it was said, with somewhat unjust severity, were

"found unfit to engage in any creditable method of subsistence." With the halter of censorship round their neck, they had a perilous career; and their struggle for securing liberty for the press deserves grateful admiration. The first Native newspaper was started in the year 1818; and in 1833 when the system of licenses and restrictions was abolished and complete liberty was given to the press, native journalism was, it may be said, yet in its swaddling clothes, though a man like Raja Ram Mohun Roy had already come forward as an editor. Indian journalists had not thus to do much in the beginning of the 19th century by way of fighting with the official enemies of the liberty of the press. They had that precious blessing ready-earned for them by fightful Anglo-Indian journalists and large-minded Anglo-Indian statesmen. Things would seem to have been reversed by the end of the nineteenth century: and while the Anglo-Indian journalists and statesmen have begun to look upon the liberty of the native press with disfavour, it seems very likely that what struggle and fight was spared to the native journalists when that liberty was first acquired, they will have now to make for preserving it from the stealthy as well as the avowed encroachments of law.

of imbibing political education and a small class at least of men competent to give it. The bulk of the first generation of educated men, however, was attracted by the dignity and the emoluments of Government service, and there was also ample room for them there. Departmental restrictions, however, were in those days less comprehensive than now, and Government servants could mix themselves in public movements without causing serious displeasure to Government. It was, therefore, when this first generation inaugurated public political work and the second generation supplied a few men who could strike for themselves an independent course of life, that Indian journalism began to assume a vigorous and respectable character. Politics is the soul of journalism; and even in the most advanced western countries where journalism has reached perfection, what percentage of newspapers are there which are devoted to purely religious or scientific, or industrial education?

With the limited space at my command, it is not possible to trace the growth of Indian journalism in the different provinces of India. But a few broad features of this growth may be noted. The progress of Indian journalism in the different provinces seems to have varied more or less according to the duration of the British rule over them. Thus the province of Bengal was one of the first to come under British rule, and it is here we find that journalism has achieved greater success than in any other province. Our Bengalee brethren are head and shoulder over the rest of us in point of literary culture and development; and the Bengal press, taken together and all in all is, in my opinion, worthy of the lead it has got. *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, *The Bengalee*, *The Indian Nation*, *The Hindoo Patriot*, and *Reis and Ray*; it in their best days are specimens of journalism of which even a European nation

may be proud. It is also in Bengal that we have vernacular newspapers whose circulation has reached the imposing figure of twenty or twenty five thousand copies. Turning to the Madras Presidency, we find that leaving the Presidency town aside, journalism either English or Vernacular, has not made much progress. But the two Native dailies in Madras may be said to make ample amends for that state of things. The success of the *Hindu* is simply an object lesson of what a couple of young educated gentlemen without money, but with brains and perseverance, can accomplish in the line of journalism. It is a daily paper which Indians may hold up as a fair sample of their journalistic respectability and ability. The *Madras Standard* is highly enterprising, and it has got in it a trait which characterises some of the successful newspapers in England. Turning next to Bombay we see that enterprise has always been lacking among the newspapers in this presidency, as may be seen from the fact that with so much journalistic talent in the Presidency, not a single English daily has been started till now. There are, however, a number of weeklies in the Presidency town and the Deccan which are as vigorous as they are able and respectable. Among these may be mentioned the *Dnyan Prakash*, the *Native Opinion*, the *Indu Prakash*, the *Indian Spectator*, the *Gujarati*, the *Rast Goftar*, some as they are at present and some in their best days. It is in the Bombay Presidency alone, moreover, that we have some very successful daily papers in the Gujarathi language such as the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Gujarathi*, and the *Kaisar-i-hind*, and some of the most powerful weeklies in Marathi such as the *Kesari*. In point of independence of spirit and vigour of criticism, the papers in the Bombay Presidency generally rank higher, though, as I have said above, the want of enterprise is a thing which must stand against

them. In the Berars and Central Provinces which came under British rule somewhat lately, there is not, to my knowledge, a single paper which is fairly representative of the higher quality of Indian journalism, and the dumb millions there have not even that channel for voicing forth their grievances and feelings which a powerful newspaper affords. In the Punjab the *Tribune* is doing good service; and the days of that paper under the able editorship of Mr. Gupta are very well remembered by readers even in provinces other than the Punjab. The *Phoenix* is the solitary paper in Sindh, which was so far, indeed, the most backward province in India, but which is now coming up with marked vigour. The prospects of even a daily newspaper in Sindh are, I am told, unbounded. But somehow the province has to pull on without a journal that will do it justice. In the N. W. P the *Advocate* of Lucknow is doing the work in the public cause almost single-handed; but when even cities like Allahabad and Benares must go without a good Native newspaper, there is evidently much left to be desired in that province in the direction of journalism.

There can, perhaps, be no standard by which we may say that in order that the needs of a province or a community may be adequately met it ought to possess at least a particular number of newspapers. Much depends upon the *quality* of newspapers. And while a single daily newspaper conducted with ability and independence of spirit and enterprise may go a long way and serve a whole province satisfactorily, on the other hand, a host of ill-conducted newspapers may accomplish but little, as they will probably attract little notice, much less command the respect of the rulers or even of the educated Native public. In 1896, however, there were 647 periodicals in Bengal, 123 in the N. W. P., 200 in Bombay and

111 in Madras. From these, however, we must deduct the number of Anglo-Indian newspapers, purely literary or religious or scientific magazines and such other miscellaneous journals. The remainder can hardly be said to be an adequate number of Native newspapers to do justice to the vast concerns of 300 millions.

Another remarkable feature of Native journalism is that, while the Vernacular newspapers are numerically superior, the real strength and ability of Native journalism lies in newspapers conducted in the English language. The fact is very significant. Native journalism has a two-fold object, one is to attract the attention of Government and to appeal to them for redressing public grievances; the other is to educate the people and to eventually create public opinion. The former object has been evidently regarded so far as the more urgent; and the best energy and talent in Native journalism has manifested itself through the English language. It was the language of the Universities, and, therefore, the language of the higher educated classes. There was also another but a less creditable reason; the Vernacular was shamefully neglected, and the best of our graduates and learned men could not, during the earlier years, write the mother-tongue so as to do themselves or the language any justice. Things have, however, changed. The second object of journalism *viz.*, educating the masses and creating a body of public opinion is only of late gradually coming to the forefront, and our educated men have begun to take delight and feel honour in doing a natural duty *viz.*, improving their mother-tongue and making it more their own. But, however we may improve and be able to command our vernaculars, the great need for writing in English would never disappear. In a letter to Mr. Meredith Townsend who had inquired why able Natives should publish in a

foreign language instead of making a literature of their own. Babu Sambhu Chandra Mukerjee, one of the most famous and brilliant journalists of Bengal, had replied in these words:—"We might have created one of the finest literatures in the world without making any *impression* in the camp of our British rulers and of course without advancing our political or even social status. Nay, the truth is we *have* created a literature and very respectable literature it is. All that copiousness and all that wealth, however, has not helped us one whit or rescued us from degradation. Hence we are compelled to journalism and authorship in a foreign tongue, to make English a kind of second vernacular to us, if possible. You have no idea of the enormous personal sacrifice involved in this. English does not offer us an earnest of future. It is those that cultivate Bengali that will be remembered by their countrymen. But we, who write in English, have to make this sacrifice for the fatherland." Sambhu Babu's explanation has much truth in it, and it will undoubtedly be appreciated by those who are, like him, doomed to carry on journalism in English.

Good journalism can only be made by good journalists, and one of the first requisites for a good journalist is that he must pursue journalism as a profession. Professional journalists are a class which in India is yet to be *permanently and distinctly* created. That will come by and by. But the roll of even amateur or rather semi-professional journalists which India actually possessed during the nineteenth century is one of which she may be proud. I fear I shall not succeed in making an exhaustive list; but I venture to offer the following as a provisional list which may certainly be improved upon, but only by addition to it. To Bengal belong Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Babus Harish Chundra Mookerji, Kristo



• Das Pal, Rajkumar Sarvadhikari, Krishna Kamal Bhattacharji, Sambhu Chundra Mukerji, Shisher Kumar Ghose, Motilal Ghose, Pad-hah, N. N. Ghose, Surendra Nath Banerji, and Narendra Nath Sen. Madras can claim Messrs. G. Subramanaya Iyer, Viraraghavachari, Shankar Nair, Natarajan, Karunakara, Menon, and P. Pillai. To the credit of Bombay may be cited Messrs. Dadabhai Naoroji, M. G. Ranade, Mandlik, J. S. Gadgil, Permanand Malabari, Chandavarkar, Wacha, Bhatavadekar, Khare, N. V. Gokhale, Padhye, Samartha, Desai and Shroff; and to that of the Deccan, Krishna Sastri Chiploonkar, Mr. Vishnu Sastri Chiploonkar, Professors Tilak, Agarkar, Vasudevrao Kelkar, G. K. Gokhale, S. H. Chiploonkar and M. R. Bodas. In Nagpur we had Mr. Pandit and in the Punjab Mr. Gupta; while in the United Provinces may be mentioned Pandits Bishen Narayen and Ganga Prasad Varma. This is a galaxy of journalists who have by their brilliance shed a light of glory upon their country and who, under more favourable conditions of political life, would certainly have come up to a higher level as publicists than they at present occupy.

Various have been the estimates made of native journalism. If on the one hand we have it described as a "*brood of vipers hatched out on the Congress of dunghill*" by the rattle-snakes in the form of sedition-mongers," on the other hand we have testimony to the effect that the Native press is thoroughly loyal, respectable, and bound to be ere long the controlling force in the country. It is difficult to reconcile the two estimates. But we can explain the difference when we understand that the first estimate is made by men like Mr. Arthur Crawford, the Prince of corruption in the Civil Service, and the latter is by some of the best British and Anglo-Indian statesmen. It may be said, at any rate, that Native journalism has now out-

lived that stage of growth in which opposition and want of self-confidence act as the outward and inward enemies of any institution. Native journalists have now begun to feel that they can make journalism not only a respectable but a remunerative trade, and what is more, that they can command even some of its higher fruit, such as the formation of public opinion and the influencing of the action of Government in an appreciable manner. It is not now unoften to find Native opinion, as expressed through the press, quoted or referred to by the members of Legislative Councils and even the Governors or the Governor-General. No doubt such a compliment need be expected only when the Government is conscious of its need of strength in a contest against the State Secretary, for example, or when shrewdness counsels that much capital can be made out of a casual coincidence between the Government and the people, by way of showing off to the latter that their opinion is treated with some regard. But whether Government may or may not sincerely like to consult Native opinion, by their conduct at least they admit that *on principle* they ought to. It is not, in the present condition of Native journalism, a small compliment to it that it should be given credit for inducing Government to at least such courses of action as they are already determined upon.

I will conclude by noting only one more point. Though Native journalism is now on the high road to improvement and progress, still it must not be forgotten that this progress has a limit on account of the peculiar conditions of the country. Politics, as I have observed above, is the soul of journalism; and so long as we are politically at the foot of the ladder the enterprise and progress of our journalism must stop at an ascertainable limit. A moment's reflection will shew that the province

of things which is likely to interest our people is small and confined more or less to India. We have no Colonies and no Dependencies out in the world; and even within India our interest can touch but the fringe of the vast administrative problems. In England, for instance, however, they live and breathe politics and nothing else. As Addison has somewhere remarked, almost every age, sex and profession among the English people has its favourite set of ministers and scheme of government. Their children are initiated into politics and factions even before they know their right hand from the left. "They no sooner begin to speak, but Liberal and Conservative are the first words they learn." But in India, our interests in the country's administration are extremely limited; and as a writer in the *Pioneer* had remarked three years ago, "people found papers to promote certain interests but not with the object of spreading abstract truth." In England the main business of a paper is to champion the cause of one or other of the great political parties *which hopes one day to come into power*. But in India political power is almost a forlorn hope, and it is clearly understood by the Government and by the people even more than the Government, that a despotic Government, as the one in India, cannot possibly be shaken by newspaper criticism. Government may be disposed to rule the country in the interests of the people; but they are determined that the only condition of such a rule will always be that *they*, the rulers, and not the people, will be the sole and ultimate judges as to what is and what is not in their interests.

Subject to the limitations implied in the above state of things, the field of progress for Native journalism is unbounded; and as a member of the fraternity of journalists, I wish hearty success to it in the smiling dawn of the twentieth century.

(Feb. 1901)

## The Imperial Press Conference

The Imperial Press Conference which met at London last week is one more piece of evidence which goes to show that the fever of Imperialism is on the increase in England. If we may judge of the spirit of the Conference by the inaugural address of the politician who presided over it, we may safely say that there was more of the affairs of State than the affairs of the Press in the minds of the persons who organised the Conference. Patriotic Englishmen, who have begun to dread the isolation of England and the prosperity and the ambition of rising nations around her, have long since decided upon artificial stimulation of the spirit of Imperial patriotism in the minds of Englishmen scattered all over the globe as the best means of meeting the situation, and the Press Conference is no less a manifestation of this political shrewdness than the Conferences which met before to discuss the Imperial commerce and tariff, or Imperial military and naval defence. A vigorous and enterprising Imperialistic newspaper in any British Colony or Dependency is to-day as valuable an asset to Little England as an army corps of volunteers or the much dreaded Dreadnought. The Press Conference is an act in the manipulation intended to twist the tail of the British lion; and Lord Rosebury expressed the true sentiment of the Conference when he appealed to the press through the delegates assembled to "wake up the nation." Nobody can fail to be struck with the fact that latterly every form of British activity has been pointing towards an inward vortex of political sentiment, which draws everything into itself. India forms a part of the Empire and she could not be excluded from representation at this conference. And the invitation given to her, to be represented at the assembly of press representatives, is

tive enemies such as the stamp laws and the press laws, as well as with the subjective enemies in the shape of its own defects and vices such as extravagance, scurrility and love of falsehood. The Press has now a recognised place in the political and social Commonwealth of England. It is called the fourth estate of the realm, the three others being the King, the Lords and the Commons; and it will be long before, even when the whirligig of time is moving, the Press will be, if ever at all, displaced from this high pedestal of glory. As Lord Rosebury remarked in his inaugural address, Ministers and Parliaments will go but the Press will remain eternal and supreme. Like an octopus it encircles and encompasses the globe with its numberless arms, we mean its worldwide news-cables, its multi-million issues, its smart news-writers and reporters, its ordinary and special correspondents, its enterprising interviewers, its bold and daring war-correspondents, its specialist contributors of articles, its brilliant leaderwriters, and last but not least its *omniscient* editors-generals! The press is the modern 'king-maker' in every country, and the hold of the newspapers on the mind of the nation everywhere is so excessive that apprehensions are already being felt about the power being turned into tyranny.

Newspapers have become a part of the necessary movement of life in every civilised society. The primary cause of this is the thirst for news, thirst for hearing unheard of things which is the same to day as it was thousands of years ago. It was Johnson who remarked: "Tous who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence and supplied from day to day with material for conservation, it is difficult to conceive how man can subsist without a newspaper." And Addison exercised his gentle humour on news-mongering in these words: "You must have observed that men who frequent coffee houses and delight in news

are pleased with every thing that is matter of fact, so it be what they have not heard before. A victory or a defeat is equally agreeable to them. The shutting of a Cardinal's mouth pleases them one post and the opening of it, another. They are glad to hear the French Court is removed to Marli and are afterwards as much delighted with its return to Versailles. They read their advertisements with the same curiosity as the articles of public news and are pleased to hear of a piebald horse that is strayed out of a field near the Islington as of a whole troop that has been engaged in any foreign adventure. In short, they have a relish for every thing that is news, let the matter of it be what it will. Or to speak more properly they are men of a voracious appetite but no taste." The daily paper has become the necessary accompaniment of the morning and the evening cup of tea. But even of a good thing it is possible to have too much and the love of news and especially sensational news has had the effect of spoiling the character of journalism. "There is now-a-days" once wrote Mr. Labouchere in the *Truth*, "such a craving for sensation and such a morbid curiosity to learn not only what has happened of general importance during the last twentyfour hours but to read the most trivial details respecting all persons concerned in passing events, that a newspaper is obliged to be sensational and trivial." One new daily paper means the investing of at least half a million pounds; and the investor of course expects proportionate profits. To make them he must, says Mr. Labouchere, "provide a sheet that ministers to the public taste. The successful journalist is the man who understands that taste. If he informs the public who have been walking in the Park on the previous day, what bonnet this lady has worn and what dress that lady has worn, if he piles on the agony at every possible opportunity, if he publishes un-

dom and quiet humour Stripped of its extravagances, however, the newspaper press has always been a most cherishable institution. The work of an editor was perhaps never the highest in the world but it was always very useful work if honestly discharged. Lord Courtney, himself an accomplished and tried journalist, has claimed that it was as easy and as common to be honest in Fleet Street as it was to be honest in Westminster! "The editor of a newspaper could get as near the expression of his inmost thought as the leader of a political party; and the severity and the pressure of partisanship was certainly no greater among the contributors of a newspaper than it was among the members of a political party." And with these remarks we join the Press Conference in spirit, wish them success, and hope to hear interesting things about their deliberations two weeks hence when the English mail will bring us full details of the same. (13-7-1909)

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### The 'Lions' of the Press

The representatives of the Imperial Press, who assembled in England three weeks ago, were so well received and so sumptuously entertained that men belonging to any other profession might well have envied for the time the honour and the attention. It is said that an American school-boy, once asked to write an essay on the subject of newspapers, commenced his theme by describing an editor as follows: "The editor is one of the happiest beggars in the world. He can go to the circus in the afternoon and evening without paying a cent, also to inquest and hangings. He has free tickets to the theatre and gets wedding-cakes sent to him, and sometimes gets licked, but not often. While other folks have to go to bed

England by an editor upon one of the usual notoriety-hunters at a well-known fashionable resort. The gentleman in question was an obscure member of Parliament who was newly married and was spending his honeymoon at the place. One night he called upon the editor of the local newspaper. "Could'nt you " he said "put in the paper that I am at the... ..hotel with my bride; and just fling in something about my being a prominent politician? I don't care anything about this sort of thing myself, but you know how the women like it. I want fifty copies of the paper sent to this address." And he laid down half a sovereign, said "good-night " and vanished. Next morning he read in the paper the following—"Mr. John H., M. P., requests us to say that he is at the .. ..hotel with his bride; that he is a prominent politician; that he himself personally cares nothing for newspaper notoriety but that a society note would be highly gratifying to Mrs. H. He added that he wanted fifty copies of the paper, for which he made a handsome payment, to distribute among his constituents." The joke was certainly cruel but who will say that the cruelty was not well deserved?

The life of an editor is not all made up of the 'circus-seeing' as the American school-boy would seem to think. There is a lot of harassing anxiety associated with a seat in an editorial chair. The one thing which is most hard upon an editor is that unlike other people, who can keep their own opinions of men and things to themselves, an editor is bound to give expression, and that the quickest and earliest expression to his views; and circumstances could be easily imagined in which expression of opinion becomes an unpleasant task. Why should he of all men be under compulsion to speak out, or at least to be driven to dissembling when he cannot, and to use language as if it was made by God for enabling man to conceal his



thoughts ? An editor may choose to be unpleasantly frank or foolish in what he has to say; but what is forbidden to him is silence. He must touch upon what will be commonly talked about. Now, an editor is not free from common human mistakes which other people commit. Despite the watchful vigilance of an editor an error of omission or commission of one sort or another is sure to be committed. But the consequences of the error in his case are somewhat different from those of the errors committed by other members of the erring human fraternity. 'A lawyer may by a blunder lose a case involving the loss of thousands of pounds, a doctor may kill a patient by wrong treatment. But no one knows of it outside the family or the persons concerned. In a commercial business if a manager commits a serious mistake it is not paraded before the general public. But in the case of a journalistic error the only limit to its proclamation from the house-tops is the circulation of the newspaper itself. A London morning journal, which has blundered, tells the story of its disgrace to something like a million unsympathetic people.' And lastly we may mention the fact that among the respectable classes of society there is none that has his neck in the halter of the law so much as the class of journalists. The patriotic feeling being a factor common to all, why should the newspaper man alone have to suffer so much in the campaign of repression in India in 1908-09 ? The public on the whole is not more generous to the class of journalists than to the men of any other profession, though they are certainly more useful to the public than the men of many other professions, at least in the present course and fashion of public affairs. Lord Rosebury did not particularly exaggerate the usefulness and importance of editors when he happily compared them to the winds in the cave under the command of the King Aeolus. Journa-

lism puts under obligation not only fleeting politics and most other *currents* of public life; but it is also vitally connected with literature which is the one possession of a cultured people that abides and forms an eternal source of the only kind of pride which may be pardoned in this world.

What holds good in England holds good in India too; in this country human nature is not differently constituted. It is easy to deride newspaper notoriety; but hardly one in a hundred, who can command it, will deliberately avoid it. The newspaper in England or in India is as it were full only of *advertisements* from end to end; and if some of these advertisements are paid for the others are gratis. That is the only difference. The paying advertiser pays and is the sole master of the so-many-inches-space allotted to him in return. His space is a protected ring in which he always shouts out his own merits and occasionally libels his rival. There he fights his duel and kills his opponent at leisure, though there are no seconds nor even his opponent present. If exaggeration or downright lying is apparently privileged anywhere on earth, it is within the advertisement columns. But there are people who, if they are too high for open paid advertisement, are not high enough for one of the 'masked' advertisements referred to above. The newspaper is no doubt in this way *a vanity fair*; but the editor himself is the least remarkable exhibit therein. The newspaper man may have his own failings. But it suffers less from his failings than the failings of his so-called friends, who aggravate the failings for their own advantage. These self-styled friends, as says Hazlitt in his sketches and essays, "are the night-shade and hemlock clinging to the work, preventing its growth and circulation and dropping a slumberous poison from its jaundiced leaves." They form a *cordon*, an opaque

mass round the editor, and persuade him that they are the support, the prop, the pillar of his reputation. They get between him and the public and shut out the light and set aside common sense. They pretend anxiety for the interest of some established organ of opinion, while all they want is to make it the organ of their own dogmas, prejudices or party. They want the Magazine or the Review to wield that power covertly, to warp that influence to their own purpose. An editor is often taxed with the offence of the assumption of omniscience and self-importance. Kings, it is said, are not the only servants of the public who imagine that *they* are the State. They are dreadfully afraid there should be anything behind the editor's chair greater than the editor's chair. A claim to omniscience is no doubt bound to make any claimant ridiculous. But two things may be remembered in this connection. In the first place self-confidence is the key to all writing that is calculated to impress the reader-world. An editor ought never to forget that he is not infallible. But he will never be able to do the kind of work that is expected from him, if the limitations upon his knowledge are allowed to be tacked on as a preamble to everything he writes. If there is a limit beyond which he may not affect knowledge, there is also a limit within which he must not allow his modesty to drive him. Further the variety of subjects which an editor has to deal with is in itself a justification for the omniscience he may seem to claim. For his *seeming omniscience* is his *real versatility*; and if an editor has many more surfaces to his mind than other people, it is surely not his fault. He is called upon to do an ambitious work and his mind happens to be only fitted for such work. Again it is the subjects that after all make a king; and whether an editor may or may not be really infallible or omniscient, the large circle of unquestioning believers, who

accept his word as gospel, dote upon his choice words, and voluntarily drown their own judgment in his—these people lend unmistakable colour to his claim. Most men among the reading public, when they subscribe to a newspaper also deposit their right of independent judgment in pawn with its editor, and the habit of taking opinions on trust so grows that the pawn is never afterwards redeemed.

### A Diatribe on ' Woman '

#### I

There would appear to be no limit to which man's ill-nature against woman may go; and we have in Mr. Crosland's " *Lovely Woman* " perhaps the unkindest diatribe which was indicted against womankind since English literature came to be written. The book is like a *lyddite shell* with infinite capacity for mischief and poisonous smell in every constituent particle. It is a book with a purpose, but much cannot be said in praise of that purpose if the author's words can be taken as any index of his real sentiments. But as an exercise in the work of writing substantive superlatives and the art of taking a strictly one-sided view of things, the book is a masterpiece which may be recommended to all those who wish to become writers with a single idea to impress upon the mind of the great reader-world. But on the other hand we cannot altogether ignore the fact that the book makes a very effective attack on the weak points in the movements, so far as it is a fad, of the emancipation of women. To those whose minds melt at the very thought of womankind the book cannot be readable; but it is a bold, some may call it audacious, attempt to challenge the entire claim,

that women have recognised rights in the world, at any rate that there should be no limit to their aspirations in the matter of overtaking or outrunning men in the race of this world. The author raises the whole question for debate though the form actually taken by his interrogation is that of dogmatic and downright assertion. The very dedication of the book, however, shews that the author is not that archhater of womankind which he would have us believe himself to be. For is it not significant that the book containing the most merciless and most poisonous diatribe against womankind should be dedicated to "The exception who in twelve merry months proved all the rules" laid down by him to the charge of the other sex? The dedication gives a lie to the book and betrays the soft part which Mr. Crosland has in his heart. But manners differ with men, and from the chapter of "Advice" in the book, we can clearly see that the Author has a fancy to be "the plain blunt critic." That is all. His object has been to *hurt* and *shake* the Emancipated Woman to his heart's content and then to "provide her with hints and directions which will keep her from further stumbling." And let us see how he has performed his task.

The constructive portion of the book bears no proportion to the destructive portion. But the destructive portion has all the justification of the charm of the 'exaggeration about it and one cannot help liking the forceful abandon of the style of the author. Woman, to begin at the beginning, was kept in a hutch at the bottom of the Garden and she was taken out by the melting Adam. But she never did go back and does remain as the less edifying part of the humanity—"the ivy on your oak, the poppy in your corn, the fly in your ointment, the canker in your rosebud, the phlox on your vine, the blight on your potato, the moth in your dinner-jacket."

As a little Missy, Mr. Crosland recognises Woman as nothing else than a "past mistress in the art of the petty annoyance." At ten she is faithless, spiteful, greedy, merciless, vindictive, impudent, unreasonable, unruly and illogical; and at twenty she is the same girl, only more cunning and a trifle more commercial. Mr. Crosland would seem to be aware of the not universally known fact that most healthy boys of from fifteen to seventeen hate women with a profound and implacable hatred, and even when this stage is passed and the young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love, the young man invariably has a notion that he is making an ass of himself. The girl does not improve with years and vain is the hope that the devil may have gone out of her with the lengthening of the skirts. Notwithstanding all this civilised men allow themselves to be woman-ridden, though these were "no more intended to be ruled by woman than the rabbit was intended to keep a dancing academy for bears." The head and front of the Emancipated women, however, is that by taking to men's professions they have created a third sex, as it were, members belonging to which are neither manly men nor womanly women. They are nimble, straight-backed, flat-chested, hard-featured, scanty-haired persons. The author's objection to such an arrangement is that what woman really wants is children and neither typewriting nor market gardening can provide them for her. If there may be supposed to be a place for woman outside matrimony it is a baby linen-shop. Beauty is woman's special prerogative, but twenty years' supremacy over man has earned for her the doom of early unpresentableness, and "all the paint and massage of dentistry and chiropody and beauty treatment" cannot save her from that doom. All sweet-hearts are bores; and if between kisses they will venture on the opinion that you do not

wear the right shape of collar, beneath the moon when you feel like saying 'on such a night as this' &c., they will incontinently hazard the suggestion that you should have your beard if you have a beard, or set about growing one if you have not got one. And as for a lover who is yet a *fiancee*, well a muzzled bear led for a shew by a couple of savage Frenchmen has no worse time of it, though it must be further remembered that while a man marries his first, or second sweet-heart if he gets jilted, a woman generally marries her *fifth fiancee*! Courtships are too long and Mr. Crosland would like to see them abolished by law. For the notion that time spent in wooing helps man and woman to understand each other is an entirely mistaken one, for in woman there is nothing to understand, and in man there is precious little that a woman is capable of understanding. When the sweet-heart attains to the status of a wife she knows you cannot marry another and she casts her triumph in your teeth in a thousand little ways and makes a point of outliving you. A newly married couple consists usually of a fool and a hoyden. The amount of honour and obedience that an average husband gets from an average wife could be placed comfortably on a three penny bit. "Infatuation has been man's ruin. The woman knelt before him in the dust. He looked into her eyes and sent for a priest and said 'Rise, little one, take thou my seat and let me do the kneeling.' And little one hopped into his seat forthwith And she still keeps him grovelling. Of course the proper thing to have done would have been to send for another chair." Of woman as *mamma* Mr. Crosland of course speaks with more caution, and though he credits her with the best of intentions, he calls her foolish for her pains because she has been the ruin of many a fair youth and many a goodly damsel. But a *mamma-in-law* is greatly different from a

mamma, and what Mr. Crosland may have to say of her can easily be imagined. But if all this is true of women how is it that they have been so well spoken of and adored by men in actual life and literature? The author's answer is readily given. The poets invariably made it a business to tell falsehoods about women and so far as the English speaking race is concerned there is no doubt that the chief promulgator of those falsehoods has been one William Shakespeare. His candle burns the brightest on the Woman's altar, and the other and minor poets' lights have been lit off Shakespeare's. So also fiction *i. e.* novels are responsible for propagating the idea that woman is a mixture of angel and devil, principally angel and that man is a mixture of idiot and angel, principally an idiot.

## II

As for women-writers, they have, like the point in Euclid, neither "parts nor magnitude." The woman-writer is an offence and Mr. Crosland thinks that Sappho may have been a man and Homer may have been a woman, to judge them by their writings. Excepting Mrs. Browning, Ouida and a few others he sees no merit in any woman-writer, and is convinced that even when they do well they do it by a fluke. On dress the author has a number of aphorisms of advice to offer and some of them are very clever. "The inexpensive is not necessarily the unbecoming; a turned silk is better than a harassed husband" and so on. The moral virtues of women is of course a delicate topic; but our author thinks that moral aberration is just as common among women as kissing. "Of old women were respected because they were either chaste or the mothers of children. Nowadays they exhibit a tendency to be neither the one nor the other, Sport has been not a blessing but a curse to women



and in the case of both maid and matron it makes for masculinity, unattractiveness, hair-pulling in the family circle and early graves for all concerned. One sport, at any rate, says the author, has nowadays become unpleasantly common, namely husband-beating. But man does not always loudly complain against it. He draws the line at the police court. "Gallantry demands that you should take your licking like a gentleman. Above all you must not hit back." The only class of women that have earned some though mild and conditioned approval of our author is that of widows. They have gone through the mill and are better therefor, and his approval of widows goes so far that Mr. Crosland seriously says, "when I look out upon life in my calmest moments I am prone to wish that all women were widows." ' If Shakespeare had married a widow the whole aspect of literary woman-worship would have been changed. Somebody ought really to write a love play with a good round white cheeked sensible widow for Juliet. The affair would not end in tragedy and comfortable peace." A grass widow, however, is an abomination. She is a *devil* in petticoat and the mammon of unrighteousness with its hair done up. And as for flirting with grass widows the author would prefer flirting with a crocodile. The Married Women's Property Act was not needed to let women tyrannise over men; but since the Act was passed, women have become boudoir-lawyers, though the only property that amounts to anything a woman can really have is a good husband. Women of course love jewelry with a passion, and the woman who can withstand its temptation has not been born; she will give you "one hug for a cheap ring, two for a dearer one, three hugs for pearls and four for diamonds." Golconda and Kimberly have been woman's affairs. "Sweat and blood, slavery and fraud, millionairessdom, and innumer-

able other ills, all for the decking of a milk-white woman with bits of glare." The author frankly admits, however, that that snowy bosoms should lift and lower fortunes as they rise and fall is no doubt highly interesting from a dynamic point of view. Also jewelry is to be prized which might help to patch up silly misunderstandings or serve as a real love token, a token of love renewed, or a truce between wranglers.

The author, all along expecting that he would be challenged to say whether he does not stand isolated in his views about women, has carefully culled certain apothegms from the writing of the great and wise and he flings them in the face of the "perspiring reviewer" evidently to enjoy the cruel sport of his suffering. And we cannot resist the temptation of culling some of them for the benefit of such of our readers as may happen to agree with our eccentric author or these 'great and wise' men whom he quotes with approval:—

"He knows little who tells his wife all he knows. My only books are woman's looks, and folly is all they have taught me. Had women no more charms in their bodies than in their minds we should see more wise men in the world. He seldom errs who thinks the worst he can of womankind. Were it not for women there would be no 'damnation. In wickedness the wit of woman was never yet found barren. Women are at home devils. Of all the plagues with which the world is cursed, of every ill a woman is the worst. Woman is the mistress of the..... completely embittering the life of the person on whom she depends. Women, priests and poultry have never enough. Oh woman! thou shouldst have few sins of thine own to answer for; thou art the author of such a book of follies in a man that it would need the tears of all the angels to blot the record out. A young man married is a young

man marred. Better the devil than a woman's slave. Men have many faults, women have only two:—there is nothing good they say and nothing right they do. There is hardly a strife in which a woman has not been the prime mover. A woman, a dog and a walnut tree, the more you beat them, the better they be. Woman is at best a contradiction still. Believe a woman or an epitaph. Frailty, thy name is woman. Woman's faith and woman's trust, write the characters in dust. Heaven gave to woman the peculiar grace to spin, to weep and cull the human race.' And so on and so on. What can we say of these apothegms except they too have all the charm of exaggeration?

It is only when the author enters upon giving women "advice" that he seems to become serious but even in that mood his words have somehow lost their balance. The emancipated woman perhaps meant well at starting. But she has undoubtedly gone further than she had intended, and that so far from cutting a noble figure before the world she has simply been playing "ridiculous and fantastic tricks" and the author is certain that the day will dawn when woman will be relegated to her natural sphere. Firmness is only what is wanted on the part of man to bring about the consummation and "less freedom, less pin money," says the author, "less incense, less deference, less power in the household, a less frequent appearance in public places, fewer dresses, fewer jewels, fewer compliments might bring the enemy to whatever small senses she possesses."

(November 1903)

### The Bright Side of Evolution

#### I

It is a remarkable fact that the acceptance of the doctrine of Evolution in England was synchronous with the

imals and men are essentially selfish will easily draw an assent from them. The phrase, moreover, beautifully crystallises one prominent, if not the sole agency by which animal life preserves and develops itself, and the temptation to make it a watchword, therefore, must have in many cases proved irresistible. But the theory of the "struggle for existence" did not catch only ordinary minds. For a time the theory gave its tinge to every creed, and it was not a rare thing to see even spiritually minded men making it their own, and emphasizing the struggle and all the evil and misery it meant in their writings; though they were prepared to go behind that struggle and while recognizing its existence would reconcile it with the moral government of God. Tennyson is one among a few prominent instances of this kind, and those who have read his *In Memoriam* will easily admit the truth of our observation. The latest conclusions of Geology and the theory of Evolution impressed him so deeply that he was forced to ask himself the question:—

"Are God and nature then at strife,  
That nature lends such evil dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of single life."

When he spoke of nature "red in tooth and claw," or "dragons of the prime, who tear each other in their slime," nothing else could have been possibly present to his mind than the facts which were multiplied in his time to illustrate the struggle for existence. The struggle for existence, and apparent cruelty of nature, observes one writer on commenting on these lines, is embodied here as the wild eagle dropping gore from beak and talon and shrieking with ravine against the creed of love and mercy.

It goes without saying that the teaching of the terrible doctrine of the struggle for existence must tend to make

the mind gloomy and cynical, and even a philosopher like Huxley laid down his conviction that at least upon his savage state, man had been indebted for his successful progress to those qualities which he shares with the ape and the tiger, and when that stage was reached, "men strove with their enemies and their competitors; prayed upon things weaker or less cunning than themselves; they were born, multiplied without stint, and died for thousands of generations, alongside the mammoth, the urn, the lion and the hyæna whose lives were spent in the same way, and they were no more to be praised or blamed on moral grounds than their less erect and more hairy compatriots. Life was a continual free fight, and beyond the limited and temporary relations of the family the Hobbesian War of each against all was the normal state of existence. The human species like others plashed and floundered amid the general stream of evolution, keeping its head above water as it best might, and thinking neither of whence, or whither." And in his cynical mood, one might pardonably think that even in our present day civilization men are not much better than they are above described.

The educated men of India who often turned to the works of Spencer or Darwin were for a long time exposed to the subtle cynicism inculcated by the conclusions implied in the theory of the struggle for existence; and there is reason to suppose that this state of things partly led to the growth of materialism and cynicism in their minds. An antidote to such a philosophy has of course been always available if one cared to look for it in our own works on philosophy. The Indian theory of creation does not tally with the theory of evolution as expounded by Spencer, much less as by Darwin, and the *karmi*-theory gives a much more plausible explanation of the lot of man in this world than natural selection. But as

introduction of English education in India on a University basis. It was natural, therefore, that in their higher studies the kind of literature that more than anything else crossed the path of Indian students, was the literature not relating to the doctrine of evolution. And even to this day, so far as English philosophy of organic nature is concerned the authors familiar to the Indian students are Spencer and Darwin. We may at once say that the study of these authors by Indian students is not very deep; and for reasons *which are far from unaccountable, there has never been*, in their minds, anything like an enthusiasm about the doctrines preached by these philosophers. But with them the names of Darwin and Spencer happen to be the names to conjure with, and so long at least as they have not developed the taste for a comparative study of Indian and English philosophy of organic nature, the above-named authors will be to them the fountainheads of all philosophical gospel. The natural effects of such a state of things on the minds of Indian students have become apparent and it becomes, therefore, necessary to studiously notice and prominently put forward the changes which from time to time come upon the attitude of the public mind in England itself towards the doctrines inculcated by the philosophers of Evolution.

To come to the point directly we may begin by pointing out very briefly what is understood by the doctrine of Evolution. An Evolutionist may be said to be one who believes it to be scientifically demonstrable, or, at any rate, to be much the most probable hypothesis, that living types originate by development, the one out of the other, under the influence of agencies at work now and which we are capable of knowing now or may expect to know in a reasonable time. So much being common ground, the parting of the ways came with the agencies by which the deve-

lopment was supposed to be worked out. Adverting to his own view about such agencies, Mr. Herbert Spencer defined Evolution as "a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity, through continuous differentiations and integrations." Darwin, again, believed that the sole or principal agency by which living types are evolved is natural selection or the survival of the fittest, that is to say, "the presence of a general tendency to vary indefinitely, coupled with the gradual accumulation and intensification of such variations as happen to be favourable to the organism either coupled or not with sexual selections." Now it is true that the theory of Evolution has not yet gained universal acceptance and that some only regard it as an hypothesis unverified, and perhaps also unverifiable. On the other hand, many a critic has conclusively shown that Darwin's theory of natural selection, though plausible, is yet circumscribed by numerous limitations, especially in its application to the development of the human being from the lower species of creation. But on the whole and notwithstanding these criticisms, some indeed very powerfully destructive, Darwin's theory of natural selection seems yet to enjoy that sway on the educated mind which few theories have enjoyed of late. The theory has given a phrase to literature, and its constant use indicates that the truth sought to be inculcated by it by Darwin has not only obtained acceptance from a large portion of the educated public but has gone very home to their hearts. The phrase "struggle for existence" has obtained even greater currency than the King's coin, and the effect of imbibing its import upon the mind that has been imbibing it for so long a time, must be something very enormous and appreciable. Selfishness is a thing of which few individuals will be ready to accuse themselves as individuals. But the proposition that ani-

imals and men are essentially selfish will easily draw an assent from them. The phrase, moreover, beautifully crystalises one prominent, if not the sole agency by which animal life preserves and develops itself, and the temptation to make it a watchword, therefore, must have in many cases proved irresistible. But the theory of the "struggle for existence" did not catch only ordinary minds. For a time the theory gave its tinge to every creed, and it was not a rare thing to see even spiritually minded men making it their own, and emphasizing the struggle and all the evil and misery it meant in their writings; though they were prepared to go behind that struggle and while recognizing its existence would reconcile it with the moral government of God. Tennyson is one among a few prominent instances of this kind, and those who have read his *In Memoriam* will easily admit the truth of our observation. The latest conclusions of Geology and the theory of Evolution impressed him so deeply that he was forced to ask himself the question :—

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we said at the beginning of this article, a comparative study of Indian and English philosophy of organic life was never much in vogue in the early stages of western education in India, nor even now is it sufficiently stimulated. In these circumstances we have to note and point out to public attention the changes that are gradually coming upon Darwinism; so that the remedy for counteracting the influence upon Indian educated mind may be drawn from the very sources from which the original evil has arisen. A distinct reaction has latterly been set up against Darwinism, we mean its most severe and extreme conclusions as to the agencies of evolution, and we propose in the next article to allude to, we cannot review at length, Prince Kropotkin's new book called "Mutual Aid, a Factor of Evolution," as also Prof. Henry Drummond's "The Ascent of Man," both of which set out the important modifications with which the Darwinian doctrine has to be tempered.

## II

Before proceeding to consider the opinions put forward by Prince Kropotkin and Professor Drummond we think it worth while to emphasise the fact that the modifications of the Darwinian doctrine of natural selection and the struggle for existence set out by these two authors are not conceived in any theological spirit. A faith in the moral government of the world by God, where it truly exists, is simply invincible; and a mind under the power of such a faith can explain or justify any examples of injustice or misery with which it may be confronted in the human world. Here, however, the solution does not appeal to reason, but can be appreciated only by one who may be endowed with enthusiastic sentimentality. But for the views of Prince Kropotkin and Prof. Drummond only a rational basis is claimed. What is even of greater importance is that they work on the same plane and essentially

by the same methods by which Darwin has arrived at his conclusions. The field of their data is identical, and we for one cannot perceive that there is any difference in the degree of importance which Darwin as well as his critics attach to observed phenomena in the sociological field as reliable illustrations of facts. And the modifications of the Darwinian theory which we shall presently notice have to be accorded the same weight and consideration which the original theory has so far received. The modifications as already pointed out are entirely non-theological but strictly scientific in their spirit.

To begin with the modification imposed upon the Darwinian theory by Prince Kropotkin. This Russian scientist has recently published a book called "Mutual Aid—a Factor of Evolution." The title of the book speaks for itself. It means that though struggle for existence is no doubt an important factor in the development of animal life, still that factor by itself cannot account for all the varied phenomena afforded by animal life; and that mutual aid or co-operation is another factor which has its own work to do in evolving animal life. Prince Kropotkin has been working at this idea of his for a long time, though he has published the results of his thought on the subject in a book form only recently. For so far back as 1890, Prince Kropotkin has set out his views in an article contributed to the *Nineteenth Century Review*. In that article he had made the following remarks:—"As soon as we study animals, not in laboratories and museums only, but in the forest and prairie, in the steppes and mountains,—we at once perceive that though there is an immense amount of warfare and extermination going on amidst various species, and specially amidst various classes of animals, there is at the same time or perhaps more, of mutual support, mutual aid and mutual defence, amidst

one goes higher up the grades of animal life. Thus the ants are very social in their habits, and their republic is not possible unless they appreciate and practise co-operation. The birds also help one another, and though the proverbial case of the cuckoo getting its young ones brought up by other birds may be regarded by some as a mere poetical convention, still there can be no doubt about the fact that crows and sparrows and other species contribute to self-preservation by mutual aid and common defence. The beetles are said to roll each other's balls as readily as their own. And a young rabbit, it is said, renders obedience not only to its father but its grand father. Prince Kropotkin has given interesting instances from his direct observations in Siberia, where the inclemency of the climate drives animals and beasts to mutual aid against a common enemy. As for savages, the co-operation among them is witnessed by the primitive form of the clan and its common property, its blood tie, and law of retaliation which are admittedly more abiding and powerful among savages than among civilised men. In mediæval times the principle of co-operation had greater practical operation than in modern times. And speaking generally, Prince Kropotkin contends that conflict is the mark of imperfect organisation and the higher type is that which knows least of the struggle for existence.

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### Professor Darwin's Address

The address delivered in two instalments by Prof. G. H. Darwin, F. R. S., as president of the British Association for the new year, was exclusively devoted to a proof of the universal application of the fundamental theory of natural selection which is popularly regarded to be at the

root of the doctrine of evolution. It is wellknown that this theory of natural selection was first formulated by Prof. Darwin senior, that is to say, father of the new year's president of the British Association. But the original author of the theory did not carry it much farther than the biological world; and it had been reserved for his son to show that the theory has in fact a much broader base and that the problems of life have an exact counterpart in the problems of matter so far as the method of their solution is concerned. Notwithstanding the vast, or we may say even unthinkable, difference between the size of protoplasm on the one hand and the biggest stellar body on the other, the two could be shown to be governed in their career of life by the same principle. To know this is indeed something when a superficial observation of the universe is likely to produce nothing but confusion and bewilderment. It is a triumph of knowledge that it should enable man to make every department of the world's activity his own province and to deduce from his observation in each, propositions which may be of almost universal application, and the true philosopher is he who succeeds in establishing luminous generalisations which should be accepted by specialists in different departments and thus producing harmony of thought and ultimately advancing the cause of knowledge by enabling the whole world to be together. Now what Mr. Darwin as a specialist in biology had done for his department, others have been doing for theirs. For during the last forty years the physicist and the political philosopher have been as active as the biologist, each one has observed for himself the effect of slowly varying external conditions upon internal functions, he has distinguished between stability and instability together with the causes of each and marked the cataclysms or revolutions that happened from time to time.

The facts in themselves may have been different in each case; and the time again calculated to be taken by the changes may have varied immensely, say from a millionth of a second in the biological world to millions of years in the history of the stellar world. And yet would it not be very interesting and instructive to know that the process involved in these different changes or adaptations of internal function to external surroundings was nearly the same in kind in every such department? In fact the similarity of this process is so unfailing and so universal that Prof. Darwin thinks it could "hardly be too much to assert that if the conditions which determined the stability of motion could be accurately formulated throughout the universe, the past history of the cosmos and its future fate would be unfolded." Of course the actual work of accurately defining these conditions is yet far from accomplished. But the study of stability and instability affords most of the problems which the thinkers in the different departments are at present closeted with. Each one is engaged in finding out what may be called, in the language of the evolutionary philosophy, persistent and non-persistent types of life. Taking this for his theme, Prof. Darwin proceeds to note and discuss the results of researches in physics, chemistry and astronomy. Thus in the atomic world the theory of natural selection manifests itself and in the light of this theory propositions about the structure of atoms and the transformation of elements have become more intelligible than before. The dissociation and transmutation of atoms depend on their instability and regained stability; and "survival of the stable atom thus depends on the principle of natural selection." The chemical species have thus given a further account of themselves which has necessitated a change in the accepted notions about them. The atom was so long regarded as indivisible.

But now it is proved that the simplest atom, which is that of hydrogen, consists of about 800 separate parts which are more in the nature of particles of negative electricity than solid matter. The velocity of these particles again within the space of the atom is taken at the rate of 2,00,000 miles a second, or the velocity of light. These particles repel one another and all are attracted by the 'globe' containing them. Now the point in all this according to the evolutionist is that there must be definite arrangements of the orbits in which the particles must revolve if they are to be persistent or stable in their motion. And the question must arise what are the conditions of stability by virtue of which the atom of the persistent type has survived in the struggle for existence, and what the condition of instability which led to the disappearance of the unstable or non-persistent type. The elements have never been eternal. If so how or under what conditions was it that some disappeared while others survived. The same would be the question to be asked with regard to stellar bodies though they are vastly superior in magnitude. How is it that out of the original nebulous condition of matter the solar and other systems and bodies have come to assume the present form and many others have disappeared? It is now accepted on all hands that there was the nebula in the beginning which must have gradually cooled by radiation into space, and the contraction and solidification of the gaseous matter in the nebula led to the condensed body moving faster with the result that portions of the nebula became detached and began to move and career on their own account. Now in the course of this process natural selection having come into operation the stellar bodies, enjoying certain conditions of stability yet to be investigated, completely survived in the struggle and the others perished. This phenome-

non of absorption we see recurring often even today when meteoric stones fall or are absorbed by the more stable and powerful bodies; and the same phenomenon will go on happening in future as we may take it that many of the stellar bodies which we now see enjoying apparently independent existence will have to be accounted for sooner or later. The point in all this, however, is that just as in the biological and the physical world, so also in the stellar world the principle of natural selection applies and stability or instability depends upon certain definite rules which undoubtedly exist though they may not yet have been completely investigated. Even in the heavens there must be order of some sort, and although no reason can be assigned for the observed arrangement in any particular case, yet it must be possible to obtain general ideas as to the succession of events in stellar evolution. The members of the planetary system seem to move and have their being, though on a very large scale just like the electrical particles in the body of an atom, and the ambition of the scientist is and will be to find out comprehensive laws which equally govern the movements of these particles and these planetary bodies in their orbits. Then again the birth of a stellar satellite may be described in the terms in which biologists have described the births of new biological species; in fact the birth of a double star is regarded as the exact counterpart of the phenomenon of "the protrusion of a filament of protoplasm from a living matter." Surely this community of ideas and principles in so very different departments must prove extremely instructive.

All this may be true, and yet nothing can prevent one from asking in a cynical spirit whether the theory of natural selection, even if it be proved to be true in all departments, would reveal the real secret of the universe. But even the most enthusiastic advocates of this theory of evo-



lution are not so over-ambitious as they are supposed. For while being full of admiration of their pet theory, they are always sufficiently alive to the limitations imposed on them in the work of interpretation of the universe with its aid. Thus Professor Darwin himself says, "even if we grant the exact truth of these theories, the advance toward an explanation of the universe remains miserably slight. Man is but a microscopic being relatively to astronomical space and he lives on a puny planet circling round a star of inferior rank. We may indeed be amazed at all that man has been able to find out, but the immeasurable magnitude of the undiscovered will throughout all time remain to humble his pride. Our children's children will still be gazing and marvelling at the starry heavens; but the riddle will never be read."

(24 9-1903)

### The Ideals of the East

Some eight months ago, a Japanese gentleman visited Poona to arrange for a deputation by the Deccan of one or two delegates to the Hindu Budhistic Conference that was to meet at Tokyo under the auspices of the Higachi Hongwanji. Mr. Kakasa Okakura, for that was the name of the Japanese gentleman in question, was an accredited agent of the Hongwanji, and his mission was to explain to the people of this country the noble object that the great Budhistic organisation had in view arranging the Conference which was to be much more than a religious gathering. The Conference was, it was afterwards found, to meet at a time inconvenient for the Asiatic guests, and it was postponed *sine die*. But almost exactly in the week, which was in our mind associated with the Conference, has our memory been awakened to it even through the agency

of Mr. Okakura, in a way which is likely to accomplish the objects of the Conference even without the Indian delegates having to go all the way to Japan. For never before has a Native of India had such an opportunity to know the inner sentiments of Japan towards this country as the one now afforded by Mr. Okakura by means of his book, 'The Ideals of Asia, with special reference to the Art of Japan' The book is written by a native of Japan and is printed in England, but it is, in the main, addressed to the Natives of India along with those of China and Japan who practically form the only factors of an Asiatic combination against the West, if such were at all possible in the time to come. And to complete the conditions of the fitness of things, the book is introduced to the world by Sister Nivedita of Ramkrishna and Vivekanand.

When Mr. Okakura visited Poona eight months ago, he came as a man about whose personality precious little was known. He looked like a typical son of Japan. He could but speak English with some difficulty and thus could not possibly make on those he met an impression that could do him justice, though on the face of it, it was apparent that he was an enterprising tourist with an important mission entrusted to him. It was reserved for Sister Nivedita to make the people of this Presidency better acquainted with Mr. Okakura. This Japanese gentleman, we are told, has been long known to his own people as the foremost living authority on Oriental Archaeology and Art. "Although then young, he was made a member of the Imperial Art Commission which was sent out by the Japanese Government in the year 1886 to study the art, history and movements of Europe and the United States. Far from being overwhelmed by his experience Mr. Okakura only found his appreciation of Asiatic art deepened and intensified by his travels, and since that

time he has made his influence felt increasingly in the direction of a strong re-nationalisation of Japanese art in opposition to that pseudo-Europeanising tendency now so fashionable throughout the East. On his return from the West the Government of Japan shewed its appreciation of Mr. Okakura's services and convictions by making him the Director of their new Art School at Ueno, Tokyo. But political changes brought fresh waves of the so-called Europeanisation to bear on the school, and in the year 1897 it was insisted that European methods should become increasingly prominent. Mr. Okakura now resigned. Six months later thirty-nine of the strongest young artists in Japan had grouped themselves about him, and they had opened the Nitpon Bijitsuin or Hall of Fine Arts at Yanaka in the suburbs of Tokyo". Sister Nivedita calls Mr. Okakura the William Morris of Japan and she knows better than we do in this matter. A perusal of the book at once convinces one that Mr. Okakura is a high-class writer of the English language and that his mind has been steeped in intense patriotism—a combination of things not in itself significant as to the state of the writer's own mind, but certainly so as to the state of transition through which his country is passing. The English language which has been a matter of voluntary acceptance with the Japanese happens also to be a matter of supreme necessity with us. Luckily, however, it affords a common ground for two of the more prominent Asiatic races, Japanese and Indian; and this accident must be fruitful in important results in the long run.

To turn to the contents of the book we find that it is a poetic resume of the art ideals that have dominated over and moulded the course of the national mind of Japan; and when we further see Mr. Okakura maintaining that the art ideals of Japan are the product of "Chinese

"learning and Indian religion," we at once understand the correlation between his book and his recent visit to India. The central idea of Mr. Okakura's book is that there existed in very ancient times a common Asiatic art which, and not the Greek art, left its uttermost ripple marks alike on the shores of Hellas, the extreme west of Ireland, Etruria, Phœnicia, Egypt, India and China, and that Asia must now return to and develop its own ancient ideals on pain of being overwhelmed and annihilated by the western ideals. India, China and Japan are the three trustees on whom the sacred work of the preservation of Asiatic ideals devolves, and Mr. Okakura attempts to trace the exchange transactions in art and spirituality which the three Asiatic nations have entered into from times out of memory, which have established a community of life and interests between them, and which, therefore, afford a convenient and sound basis for common action to be taken by them all jointly and severally in the cause of a revival of those Asiatic ideals that exist intact but are only bedimmed like a clouded mirror. The combination of the three nations is not a new or imaginative ideal. But it is a fact of history. Japan at least has preserved the memory of this continental fusion in the quaint folk story of three travellers meeting in Loyang. "One came from India, one from Japan and one from the celestial soil itself. 'But we meet here' said the last, 'as if to make a fan, of which China represents the paper, you from India the radiating sticks, and our Japanese guest the small but necessary pivot.'" We confess we must allow an uncommon depth of truth in this story, whoever may have originally told it. And in proportion to the age of this story will be the justification of a revival of the sentiment of the continental fusion between the three Asiatic nations concerned. As between the three, Mr. Okakura thinks Japan to be

the most obliged to India for the ideals, and to China for the means and methods of expressing those ideals. In Japan have blended the communism of Confucius and the individualism of the Vedanta; also the ethics of China and the intellectual thought of India. And if art may be described as the manifestation of motion obtaining external interpretation by expressive arrangements of line, colour, gestures, sounds etc., then in the history of the Japanese art one may find, according to Mr. Okakura, the history of the Asiatic ideals in the various departments of the fine arts.

## II

Mr. Okakura divides the entire history of the Japanese art into thirteen periods; the first being the period of primitive art before 120 B. C. and the last being the Meiji period which begins with 1850 and is still running. The 'primitive' period was characterised by that tender simplicity, that *romantic purity which tempers the soul* of Japanese art, differentiating it at once from the leaning to monotonous breadth of the Chinese and from the tendency to the overburdened richness of the Indian art. Some of the ancient temples, with their toris and rails, "so reminiscent of Indian *torāns*" are preserved in pristine exactness, and also dolmens with their shapes significant in their relation to the *stupa* and suggestive as the "prototype of the *lingam*." In the second or Confucian period, when the wave of Buddhism was yet to reach Japan, the country came under the influence of Han and the six dynasties of China. In the period Confucius devoted himself to the realisation of a religion of ethics, the consecration of man to man, and while the patriarch was the political ruler with a family as a political unit, self-

sacrifice for the community was the predominant ethical principle. Confucius was an ardent lover of music, and while he taught the people to regard poetry as a means conducing to political harmony, the art of painting was held in esteem for its inculcation of the practice of virtue. The Hang dynasty were disciples of Confucius, and the founder of the Shin dynasty, also a follower of Confucius, abolished slavery and even attempted equal division of the land amongst all people. The architecture of this period was marked by gigantic palaces representative of the life of the people. In Japan too, as in China, Confucianism provided the soil on which the seed of Buddhism fell. But the soil had to be cultivated and this was done by Laoism and Taoism which liberated art from its excessive subservience to ethics and successfully revolted against conventionalism. This was the period, we are told, when learned men retired to discuss philosophy in bamboo groves, when a prime minister would stop his coach before a roadside tavern, in order to drink with his servants in the sight of the astonished public, when a simple student ventured to delay a high dignitary and ask him to play on the flute for which he was noted. It was an era of freedom and simplicity. While all the painting was in white, the line, pure and simple, was almost an object of worship, and it may be noted that even at the present day gentleness of colour and the painting of lines continues to be the more prominent feature of the Japanese art. Next comes the era of Buddhistic influence on Asiatic art. The power of adoption and growth constitutes the greatness of the Buddhistic system; and Budha, in universalising Indian idealism in its highest intensity, becomes the ocean in which the Ganges and the Hoang Homingle their waters. In India itself the Buddhistic art grew out of what may be called the art of the Epic age;

and if it be necessary to establish its relation with any foreign school it must surely be, says Mr. Okakura, not with the Greek but with that old Asiatic art whose traces are to be found in the art of the Mesopotamians, Chinese and Persians. The Budhistic art passed through three stages, and its highest development was seen in the age of Ashoka. Buddhism was introduced into Japan in 552, in China a little earlier. "The artistic attempts of the period are numerous and some are on a gigantic scale. But the chief idea of a nation that would admit Budhistic images to the Taoistic Pantheon seem to have been the clothing of Indian religion in the Chinese garb of the Han period of art, and this was done much in the way that early Christian temples and images were constructed in the style of Roman architecture and structure." Buddhism had an instantaneous influence on Chinese art, the Chinese palaces being at once changed into Budhistic temples "in an impulse of renunciation!" The Empress Dowager Ko constructed in 516 A. D. cave temples which contain more than ten thousand Budhistic images; and there are grottos after grottos, all with pointed domes; the sculptures being in high and low relief and the main figures cut out of the rock. In Japan the earliest imported image of Budha was burned and statues thrown into a lake. But Buddhism was soon after adopted by the Royal Court of Japan and to a Japanese lady is the credit due of having crowned the first Budhistic movement in that country with success. Colossal images of Budha in materials, chiefly bronze, mark the art of this age, but later on, proportion was improved and the rigidity of line work was softened. Then come the Nara age in Japan corresponding with an equally illustrious age in Indian art about the seventeenth century. A. D. In this age many Indian artists crossed over to the Japanese shores; and

the great Roshana Budha and the seven temples at Nara was the result. The pictorial art of Nara also is said to have been of the highest merit, and shows, says Mr. Okakura, what the Japanese genius had been able to add even to the fine workmanship of the wall painting of Ajanta caves. Next comes the epoch of the spread of the influence of Hinduism together with its multitude of deities which were accepted and accommodated with or without modifications in the Japanese pantheon. The Yakshi Budha image, and the twelve Dewas by Kukai are the examples of the sculpture and painting of his epoch. Then came what may be called the Bhakti age for Japan, and Japanese painting with its delicate lines and refined colours comes into prominence at this time. The use of gold in paint also arose for the first time in this epoch. In the Kamakura period (1200-1400 A. D.) the characteristic was the return to the line work and a growth of a virility and strength of delineation. Portrait statues now claimed the foremost place in Japanese sculpture, and painting also lent itself to the illustration of heroic legends. The Ashigaka period (1400-1600 A. D.) has for its true note the modern art romanticism in its literary sense. Beauty was for the first time recognised in this age as a factor in art. The change in the next epoch is towards gorgeousness and wealth of colour rather than its inner significance. And lastly comes the realistic school of Japanese art. The Meiji period is full of new programmes and contradictions amongst which it becomes extremely difficult to construct and unify the underlying idea. Japan has, in this age, been caught between two waves of national awakening. The first began in an attempt to recall Japan to a sense of that unity which the various waves of Chinese and Indian culture had tended to obscure, and the second case of the national re-awakening was the portentous



danger with which Western encroachments on Asiatic soil threatened the Japanese national independence. In the eighteenth century Japan first came into contact with foreign art, but the influence was not at all felt. More impressive, however, was the contact with the Western art in the nineteenth century; and imitation has imposed a hard crust of mannerism on the Japanese art. A third school of art, to which Mr. Okakura himself belongs, is the school of freedom, freedom in the sense of "evolutional self-development." To this school the old art of Asia is more valid than that of any modern school, as, says Mr. Okakura, "the process of idealism and not imitation is the *raison d'être* of the art impulse." "Technique is but the weapon of artistic warfare, scientific knowledge of anatomy and perspective the commissariat that sustains the army." These, says Mr. Okakura, may be accepted without detriment by the national art, but the ideals must be forthcoming from the soul of the nation itself. It is for this reason that the author is so anxious for the revival of Asiatic ideals; and the breadth of Mr. Okakura's patriotism may be judged from the fact that he works for the revival not of the Japanese art only but of the whole Asiatic Art.

(April 1903)

### Christmas Cruelties

'Christmas cruelties' is perhaps a contradiction in terms. Yet all the same it is a hard fact. And the pamphlet containing an advance reprint of an article on this subject in the '*Humane Review*' for January 1906, which is presented to the Humanitarian League by one of its members, viz. Mr. Vasanji Khimji of Bombay, presents abundant evidence of that fact if such evidence were at

all wanted. The writer of the article, Mr. Ernest Bell, is himself a Christian; and evidently he has undertaken the task not in the spirit of an enemy of Christianity, but rather of a good friend and earnest devotee of the same who anxiously wishes its real character, as the religion founded by Jesus Christ, to be asserted and vindicated. Nor does our own interest in the subject proceed from any sectarian motives. We look at it from the point of view of the teetotaler and the vegetarian both of whom have a broad base and a recognised position. And surely if a Christian can without impropriety depict the barbarity of the immolation of the *Sati* or the inhumanity of the procession of the Jagannath's car, a vegetarian may return the compliment and legitimately criticise the Christmas orgies as he finds them. The fact that we are discussing the subject on the Christmas day is a point of propriety rather than otherwise. If there be any truth or justice in our remarks, it will, we fancy, be driven home better on this rather than any other day.

Christmas day is the greatest family *fete* day throughout Christendom. It is a holiday entirely given up to gaiety and enjoyment in every household. Perhaps the time of the year when Christmas occurs in Europe is such that the joys of a warm hearth and of idle gossiping in an inner social circle seated round it should naturally become most enjoyable. In India we may not get a clear idea of the joyful feelings which Christmas may be kindling in the heart of a Christian in England. But we too have festivals of our own, and the common element of humanity, which we share with our Christian brethren, can very well enable us temporarily to enter into their spirit and realise, if we try and have got a sufficiently vivid and sympathetic imagination, the many and varied pleasures which they enjoy in Christmas. The gathering together

of familiar faces, the decoration of houses and churches with evergreens, the opening of the hospitality of the board freely to any one and every one that asks or wants it, the exchange of gifts, presents and good-wishes, the preparation and eating of special dishes, the public shows, the display of costumes—all these are in fact the patent features of holiday-making in almost every country. The only incident in Christmas which an Indian will probably find it hard to realise the beauty of is the magic of the mistle-toe. Speaking of this magic herb, Max O'rell, the French humorist, remarks as follows in his book 'John Bull and his Island':—"The mistletoe plays an important part at Christmas. Besides all the ivy and holly with which looking glasses and picture frames are framed, branches of mistletoe are suspended from the ceiling. This part of the decorating is superintended by the young girls of the family who have their reasons for making sure that the mistletoe is conveniently placed, for every young fellow who surprises a girl beneath it has a right to put his arm round her waist and give her a kiss!" A strange custom surely, but not inhuman. But apart from the gaiety attendant on the festival, philosophical minds have also tried to find in Christmas something to minister to the soul. Washington Irving, *e. g.*, says in his Sketch Book about the gratification which it gives to one's moral sources that "There is a tone of a solemn and sacred feeling that blends with our conviviality and lifts the spirit to a state of hallowed and elevated enjoyment."

But returning to the pamphlet before us, we find that in Mr. Ernest Bell's opinion, the observance of one of the most sacred of the church's festivals, he means Christmas, has been allowed to degenerate into a species of carnival in which those who are able indulge to excess while to those who are not in a position to do so it is a season of

accentuated hardship. The first point of indictment is that Christmas entails much extra work on the already overworked. "The shop assistant trying to get into two weeks the work of four, the worn out seamstress, in the sweater's employment, struggling to finish the costumes for the folk calling themselves 'smart,' the overladen carrier and postman toiling till past mid-night, and the slaughterman extra busy standing in blood up to ankles—all to commemorate the birth of the world's saviour!" But accepting after all Christmas as the season of peace and good wishes to *men*, what, one feels tempted to ask, about the sub-human animals? An average Christian evidently sees no reason to concern himself with these. But that is precisely the point at issue between him and the vegetarian, whether he be a Christian or a Brahmin. And it is to a criticism of Christmas on this point that Mr. Bell's pamphlet is directed. Every one is welcome to his pleasures; but the question is whether those pleasures can be called legitimate which cause positive pain and even cruelty to living beings though sub-human. The question is a standing one for all time, but it becomes emphasised when we consider it in relation to a pleasure-season like Christmas. The extra slaughter of animals on Christmas eve is the most notorious feature of it, so much so, that "even the dainty Christmas cards show us arrangements of robins sitting on Christmas pudding, slaughtered birds hanging up by their legs, huge joints on dishes as though these represented the most appropriate means of commemorating the birth of the Prince of Peace!" Even Washington Irving who, as we pointed out above, has tried to derive moral gratification from merry Christmas, has shown a kind of unsusceptibility in introducing into his picture of the festival "the head of a dead pig on a dish with a lemon in its mouth." Mr. Bell has fault to find

with many a thing connected with Christmas. First he condemns the cattle-show where the royalty and the aristocracy unite in contesting with the farmer the glory of producing the pig or ox which can carry the greatest amount of fat. Next come the overladen shops of the butcher and the poulterer "piled up with the mangled bodies of slaughtered creatures and festooned overhead with strings of singing birds." Then the prize ox driven through the streets decorated for sacrifice with ribbons and coloured flowers or exhibited at the local butcher's "for the delectation of his lady customers who go to gaze and select the particular part they would like to bespeak for their own tables." Next to the pig and the ox comes the unoffending turtle which provides the soup; then the skylark, even the sweet singing of which fails to secure immunity but which on the contrary is a favourite victim; then the turkey and the geese which are, it is said, plucked alive; then the partridges and pheasants, and the wild deer, and a lot of others that could be eaten. Mr. Bell naturally sees no religious aspect in all this. "In Biblical times, truly," says he, "men used to sacrifice animals to the glorification of God. We have improved on this method; we bring our sacrifices in ever increasing number, but we eat them *ourselves* now." At any rate this could not be justified as civilised. We are aware that even heathens are not absolutely guiltless in this matter; but our censure is intended equally to apply to them.

We do not know whether Mr. Bell is acquainted with Goldsmith's remarks on this subject. No doubt Goldsmith does not specifically refer to Christmas. But he points out the contrast between the sentiments of humanity professed by Europeans and their cruel conduct towards sub-human animals which they eat. Writing as Lien Chi Altangi, the Chinese traveller, Goldsmith satirises as

follows in his 'Citizen of the World'—"The better sort here (England) pretend to the utmost compassion for animals of every kind. To hear them speak a *stranger* would be apt to imagine they could hardly hurt the gnat that stung them; they seem so tender and so full of pity that one would take them for the harmless friends of the whole creation, the protectors of the meanest insect or reptile that was privileged with existence. And yet (would you believe it?) I have seen the very men who have thus boasted of their tenderness at the same time devouring the flesh of six different animals tossed up in a fricassee. Strange contrariety of conduct, they pity and they eat the objects of their compassion!" Goldsmith, holding these views nearly 150 years ago naturally thinks of the vegetarian Brahmins in this connection. And he thus apostrophizes them—"Hail! O ye simple honest Bramins of the East, you inoffensive friends of all that were born to happiness as well as you; you never sought a shortlived pleasure from the miseries of other creatures. You never studied the tormenting arts of ingenious refinement; you never surfeited upon a guilty meal. How much more purified and refined are all your sensations than ours! You distinguish every element with the utmost precision; a stream untasted before is new luxury; a change of air is new banquet, too refined for western imaginations to conceive!" What Goldsmith satirised so long ago unfortunately still remains true; and the festival of 'peace and good-will to men' and cruelty and ill-will to animals still comes year after year and is celebrated in the same inhuman manner!

(24-12-05)

## Christianity and Vegetarianism

We lately came across a pamphlet published by Mr. Labhshankar Laxmidas and containing correspondence between himself and the Rt. Rev. Dr. Weldon, the Metropolitan of Calcutta. It is well-known that the Metropolitan professes to be ardently hopeful, that the religion of Jesus Christ would one day be accepted by all the people in India, and that he takes every opportunity to publicly express his hope in the matter. Mr. Labhshankar is certainly not the first man to be astonished at the views of the Metropolitan ; but being rather the first to be inclined to take them seriously, he asked himself how a religion that allows the slaughter of poor dumb animals for satisfying the cravings of the cursed belly can even in the fulness of time come to be acceptable to such sections of the *Hindu community* as the Jains and Brahmins who regard flesh-eating as a sin. But Mr. Labhshankar did not like to stop at asking that question to himself. He put it in all seriousness to the Metropolitan of Calcutta.

He put the matter like this.—“Do you seriously believe that volumes of comment by flesh-eating Christian Missionaries can ever harden our hearts so much as to make us accept a religion that allows the murdering and eating of our dearly loved cow, the principal source of our wealth ?” And he gave Dr. Weldon a gratuitous piece of advice and told him to command the followers of the noble religion of Christianity to be strict vegetarians. The Metropolitan of Calcutta was good enough to send a reply. Therein he offered to gladly co-operate with Mr. Labhshankar in trying to mitigate, and if possible to abolish, all sufferings needlessly inflicted upon animals. But he told him plainly that he was amazed at an educated man crediting the cow with a *soul* and making her an object of worship ! ! This

latter, however, though meant as a taunt was clearly a side-issue. Mr. Labhshankar, therefore, tackled the Metropolitan once more, and after quoting several eminent authorities for proving that flesh-eating is unnatural and unnecessary for man, called upon his opponent to take up the righteous cause of vegetarianism. In reply to this second letter the Metropolitan plainly gave Mr. Labhshankar to understand that there was no chance that the Christian church would prescribe vegetarianism as a duty. For "the church holds that man is entitled by god to use the life of animals for his own support, though of course the church at the same time holds that man ought to abstain from all unnecessary cruelty in his relation to the animal world." Mr. Labhshankar thereupon plainly and rightly told him that if that was so, then there was no chance for Christianity in India. And the correspondence practically came to a close on the point.

The position of Christianity is thus clear. It regards the killing of animals for food as no sin, and willingly permits that degree of cruelty which is *necessary* for that purpose. Christianity, however, is, it seems, against what is called vivisection in its grosser forms. The distinction appears to us to be not very logical, but one made to suit convenience only. And it not unoften gives us a good deal of amusement when we see flesh-eating men and women denouncing vivisection. It is allowed to kill an animal simply to gratify the palate, or to secure an amount of substance in a small volume of food; for it is never argued that man cannot possibly live without flesh, and vegetarians can as a matter of fact live as long and as healthy lives as flesh-eaters. Why then should it not be allowable to kill animals and torture them even so far as *necessary* for making researches in the science of medicine and thus helping to save human life indirectly? But no;



the flesh-eating anti-vivisectionist cannot see the absurdity of his own position. Only two months ago the annual meeting of the British National Anti-Vivisection Society was held at the St. James's Hall at which speeches full of abuse and reproach against even such men of science as Lord Lister were fired off, and a clamorous demand was made for the total and compulsory abolition of vivisection by the aid of law. Mr. Colridge, the principal speaker at the meeting, began his speech by declaring that they had met that night to *protect* animals. To animals, he argued, physical pain was the worst torture, for they had no martyr's crown to look forward to but only the honour of cruelty of man. He based the objections against vivisection on moral grounds and he said it is better for mankind to be without serums than without pity. As if when the animal intended for Mr. Colridge's table was that day tied down and killed, no loss of pity was involved! The Archdeacon of Westminster next spoke on the subject and solemnly declared himself against vivisection as "he had been taught to see in the universe the manifestations of the universal soul and the holiness of all things appertaining to it." As if the sheep or the cow which was being digested in the stomach of the Archdeacon at the very moment he was speaking his righteous protest, was not, when living, a manifestation of the universal soul!! Really what an irony, not of fate in this case, but of self-deceptive convenient logic!! These denouncers of vivisection forget that vivisectionists are at least more consistent than they; and if they resort to torture it is not for a selfish end but for the good of the mankind as a whole. But that is not all. For it is reported that at the meeting of the Anti-Vivisection Society referred to above, when a description was being given of some kinds of vivisection a lady interrupted

a speaker and said "Oh! we cannot hear this!" And for aught we know, she might even have fainted. But could she bear the thought that on that very day among the things served on the dinner table was the leg or the tongue of an animal which was done to death in a cruel manner for gratifying her palate? Was she aware that even while she was tossing her head in righteous indignation against vivisectionists, the feathers in her bonnet were mocking her to scorn the feathers for which an innocent bird—an animal of the universe—was shot simply because the monster of fashion may be propitiated and the lady may look pretty? But inconsistency, thy name is a flesheating anti-vivisectionist! The charge of inconsistency also applies to those who kill and torture innocent animals in the name of sport. For "what is sport" as Lady Florence Dixie says, "but the deliberate massacre in cold blood every year of thousands and tens of thousands of tame hand-reared birds who are literally driven into the jaws of death and mown down in a peculiarly brutal manner?" It is easy to reproachfully depict the horrors of a laboratory; but the pity is that the horrors of the fields of sport and the common slaughter-house are not sufficiently remembered. As for the so-called sport, Lady Florence Dixie thus describes the science which is a common incident in all sport:—

"A perfect roar of guns fills the air, louder tap and yell the beaters, above the din can be heard the heart-rending cries of wounded hares and rabbits, some of which can be seen dragging themselves away, with both hind legs broken, or turning round and round in their agony before they die. And the pheasants! They are on every side, some rising, some dropping, some lying dead, but the greater majority fluttering on the ground wounded, some with both legs broken and a wing, some with both

wings broken and a leg, others merely winged running to hide, others mortally wounded gasping out their last breath of life amidst the fiendish sounds which surround them. And this is called *sport* !.....Sport in every form and kind is horrible, from the rich man's hare-coursing to the poor man's rabbit-coursing. All show the 'tiger' that lives in our natures, and which nothing but a higher civilization will eradicate."—( *Animals*, by Henry S. Salt. )

As for the slaughter-house Mrs. Annie Besant says that if every man that eats flesh were made to pass through the experiences of the slaughter-house, a majority would be cured of meat-eating for ever. Says she :—

" The killing of animals, in order to devour their flesh is so obviously an outrage on all humane feeling, that one feels almost ashamed to mention it in a paper that is regarding man as a Director of evolution. If every one who eats flesh be taken to the shambles to watch the agonised struggles of the terrified victims as they are dragged to the spot where knife or mallet slays them ; if he could be made to stand with the odours of the blood reeking in his nostrils ; if there his astral vision could be opened, so that he might see the filthy creatures that flock round to feast on the loathsome exhalations, and see also the fear and horror of the slaughtered creatures as they arrive in the astral world and send thence currents of dread and hatred that flow between man and animals in continually red-fed streams ; if a man could pass through these experiences, he, at least, would be cured of meat-eating for ever. These things are, though men do not see them and they befoul and degrade the world."—*Man's Place and Functions in Nature* by Annie Besant.

On an average every year in the United States of America, from which well-financed Missionaries are every year sent to India to preach the virtues of Christ, at least

2 millions of cattle, 12 millions of sheep and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions of pigs are done to death. Somebody, therefore, was perfectly right when he made the remark that "what a world of good the Christian Missionaries would not do if instead of trying to convert the comparatively speaking harmless Hindus to Christianity, they would undertake to open the eyes of the tender hearted Christian ladies to the horrors of the slaughter-house and the murderous millinery which are responsible for the ruthless massacre of the millions and millions of God's beautiful animals and birds!"

It is interesting to see how Goldsmith viewed this very subject in his supposed letters of a Chinese traveller in England under the title of '*A Citizen of the World*,' Goldsmith exposes in withering sarcasm the pretended pity of flesh-eating Christians for animals. "The better sort," he says, "here pretend to the utmost compassion for animals of every kind. To hear them speak, a stranger would be apt to imagine they could hardly hurt the gnat that stung them. They seem so tender and so full of pity that one would take them for the harmless friends of the whole creation—the protectors of the meanest insect or reptile that was privileged with existence. And yet (would you believe it?) we have seen the very men who have thus boasted of their tenderness at the same time devouring the flesh of six different animals tossed up in a fricassee. Strange contrariety of conduct! They pity and they eat the object of their compassion! The lion roars with horror over its captive; the tiger sends forth its hideous shriek to intimidate its prey; no creature shews any fondness for its short-lived prisoner except a man and a cat."

Goldsmith then goes on to moralise over the subject and he observes:—"Man was born to live with innocence and simplicity, but he has deviated from nature. He was born to share the bounties of heaven, but he has monopo-

lised them. He was born to govern the mute creation, but he has become their tyrant. If an epicure now shall happen to surfeit on his last night's feast twenty animals the next day are to undergo the most exquisite tortures in order to provoke his appetite to another guilty meal. Hail. O ye simple Bramins of the East, you inoffensive friends of all that were born to happiness, you never sought a short-lived pleasure from the miseries of other creatures. You never studied the tormenting arts of ingenious refinement, you never surfeited upon a guilty meal. How much more purified and refined are all your sensations than ours? You distinguished every element with the utmost precision; a stream untasted before is new luxury, a change of air is a new banquet, too refined for Western imagination to conceive!"

(23-7-05)

### The Spread of Christianity in India

We have recently heard it debated whether Jesus Christ was or was not a real historical personage. But without entering into this interesting controversy we might say that, whether Jesus Christ did or did not exist, Christianity at any rate exists, and is a powerful entity which we have to count with in considering the problem of our national existence. For, while on the one hand Hinduism is making no converts from any other religion, Christianity is making slow but steady progress, and on the other hand, the native Christians are shewing a greater rate of increase in multiplying themselves than either the Hindoos or the Mahomedans in this country. The latest census figures shew that the number of native Christians in 1901 in India is in excess by over half a million as compared with the same number in 1891. The increase

has been in all the Provinces of India. Thus Madras shews an increase of 18 p. c., Punjab shews 33 p. c., Bengal 45 p. c., N. W. P. 75 p. c., the C. P. 100 p. c. and Assam 120 p. c. When we consider that the total Native Christian community in India is already about 7 per mille of the whole Indian population, and thus not quite a negligible quantity, the rate of increase noted above becomes a cause for anxiety. And this anxiety certainly does not abate when we further remember, that if during the last ten years the Native population generally has increased only at the rate of 7 p. c. Native Christians have, during the same period, multiplied themselves at the rate of no less than 30 p. c.

The publication of these figures has, as may be expected, been a cause of great rejoicing for the missionary world and their pious patrons. "Thank god and take courage" they are heard to say. And this great increase in Christ's fold in India appears to be important to different people from different points of view. Purely religious enthusiasts are glad that Christianity is thus seeming to be breaking Hindooism, and the time, we are told, is coming "when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole of the great continent of India, now brooding in darkness as the waters cover the sea." There are some who wish well to the progress of Christianity for the sake of the Native Christians themselves. Thus the converts and their progeny, it is said, are emancipated from the domination of the caste principle, and enjoy a freedom from artificial social restrictions far greater than that of the most enlightened sections of Hindu Society. An English religious paper puts their case thus:—

"The Native Christian may travel across the sea, and gains the approval of his community by so doing. His wife is often very young, but not so perilously young as

the average Hindu wife. To a large extent, he is delivered from the dominion of the necromancer, and if he is ill, prefers Western medicine to the charms of the village sorcerer. His food is more varied than that of his neighbours, and—though he does not mention it—the fact that he is the lineal descendant of generations of agricultural labourers has given him a constitution that is worth much in these days of competition."

The Native Christians, it is further said, are the only community in India that has its ideals in front of it. "Education is not the only aim of the Native Christian, nor does he measure merely by his savings or his acres. He has a distinctly high ideal of comfort, and to some extent, he has attained it and can *command* a salary securing his comfort." But the same facts appear to the Imperialist in another light. He calculates that every Native Christian in India is a brick contributing to the temple of imperialism which has among its blessings political power and privileges and an extension of lucrative trade. Further, Christianity has in it a power for disintegrating society and institutions in the country under its operation, a power quite invaluable to the Imperialist who wants to have his way paved before him.

With all these considerations before the mind's eye the Missionary societies are doing their work industriously, while the British Government, bound by a pledge of neutrality, are silently watching the game with hopeful interest. The work is being done in a cool and calculating manner. The friends of Christianity are apparently not at all concerned with the quality of the product of the evangelical mill. They are concerned only with the quantity, for they seem to believe that it is quantity that will enable them to compete in the long run. Naturally enough, therefore, they are also not very fastidious as to

the methods they use in working this mill. The Right Rev. L. G. Mylue, D. D., formerly Lord Bishop of Bombay, admitted this plainly in the series of lectures he delivered in the beginning of this year in England. Although the diffusion of Christianity is wide, said he, the depth of the work done in this way leaves a great deal to be desired. In the first place, only the needy among the lowest class of people in India fall a victim to the inducements of Christian Missionaries. Cheap education is used simply as a bribe to induce students to come to the school or college, and with the help of the Government or their anti-Brahmin subordinates, Missionaries do not find it difficult to convince the students of the probabilities in favour of their advancement in case they embrace Christianity. But even this attempt has generally failed, and the choice of the Missionaries is confined to young orphans to whom religion has no meaning or low class people for whom the loss of caste has no terrors. As observed by Lord Curzon somewhere, "many a Native becomes a Christian in order to get a situation as a servant or clerk, and it not infrequently happens that a shady character will suddenly find salvation for the sake of the material advantages or protection which it may be expected to confer upon him." But the Christian Missionary seems to have made up his mind that one Native Christian does not count for less than one, by whatever method or means his conversion may have been brought about. To him it is enough that one unit has been abstracted from the heathen to the Christian total and that this one convert has in him limitless potentiality as he becomes a fresh stock of descent and the ancestor of a family that may add hundreds of Christians more to the total in years to come. The object is, as Bishop Mylue put it, "to try to form a body of Native Christians, who should in time simply by being Christians, simply by being followers



of Christ, come to be a *power* among the heathens around." A Christian, who really cares for converting heathens simply because *good Christians* may be added to Christ's fold, will perhaps be inclined to reason with him, to use Bishop Mylue's own words, in the following manner:—

"Hinduism has its immense virtues. A religion, which can make a poor law unnecessary in a large country, a religion which developes the domestic virtues 'upto a very high point, as it does, certainly has something in its favour. And, again, take Mahomedanism. When you see the Mahomedan anywhere, at any time, plant down his praying carpet on the ground, and begin to say his prayers, whoever is looking on, utterly regardless of everything else, you cannot but respect that man and his religion. That being so, and the bulk of our fellow-countrymen in India not being in any way actively engaged in promoting mission work, and for the most part, not interesting themselves particularly in it, you find them settling down, first into the idea that it is utterly indifferent whether people profess the same religion as themselves or not, and then into the idea that you had much better leave them alone and be contented to let them rise to such a standard of virtue as their religion can give them, when perhaps you can only make them indifferent Christians."

But as we have already said it is the quantity and not the quality of the product of the evangelical mill that is principally looked to and there is nothing that can stem this tide of the multiplication of the Christians in India, except perhaps the efforts of the leaders of the non-Christian communities, who have had by this time ample evidence to convince them that even though aggression may be foreign to their nature, still, considerations of self-defence at any rate, should impel them to think over the evil and proceed to take remedial measures against it.

## The Historicity of Christ

\* The controversy about the historical character of Jesus Christ is not now before the public for the first time, though so far as the young generation of the Poona citizens is concerned, Thakore Kahan Chandra Varma was perhaps the first to raise the controversy before them in a public meeting. About seven years ago the conversion of some Hindu lads to Christianity in Calcutta had roused considerable feeling in the Hindu community of that place, and a general opinion prevailed that most objectionable were the methods used by Christian Missionaries in trying to secure converts. The Missionary, when on the war-path, is a terrible opponent to fight with. He has on his side the advantages of generations of training, discipline and organisation, added to the defects in the mental constitution of the Hindu society, apart from the adventitious facilities afforded by a neutral but yet a sympathetic Government. It cannot be denied that a Missionary is as a rule much better circumstanced to make conversions than the apathetic Hindu society to resist them. The *Bengalee* of Calcutta, writing about that time on the question, openly stated that it was giving expression to a most universal sentiment of the Hindu society that "the Christian Missionaries paid little heed to the feelings of the Hindus when they wrote and spoke on Hindu ideals, doctrines and gods held in the deepest reverence by the great majority of the Hindu public." The *Epiphany* for instance was carrying on through its pages a regular war upon the Hindu religion. The controversy most opportunely raised by Thakore Kahan Chandra Varma then shone effectively on such a back-ground of public feeling. And we doubt not but that many were impressed very favourably at the time with the argument he urged in

support of the theme *viz.* the purely mythical character of Christ, the founder of Christianity. One might certainly share the appreciation the public evinced in the labours of Thakorji in studying the literature so closely and making a very serious effort to investigate into the historicity of Christ. The bid that one makes in challenging the very existence of Christ cannot but be a very effective reprisal upon a certain class of Christian Missionaries, who are always fond of tearing up the roots of the religious feeling of the Hindus for their own delectation without the honest thought of adding to the enlightenment of their opponents. If one man of culture could be justified in telling another that the religion cherished by himself and his ancestors upto the hundredth degree be mere mud or dirt, then there can be no question of the legitimacy and the use of a reprisal of that kind. Anything is fair in war as in love. There is no religion in the world which is free from the very objections which some of its thoughtless advocates impute to any other religion. A religion, however bright its appearance, is after all a glass-house; and those who from under its cover throw stones at others naturally expose that house to very serious danger.

There was thus certainly a time when such reprisals on the part of the Hindus against Christian Missionaries were called for. Thirty years ago even in this part of the country the aggressive Missionary was abroad. It was a time when the new western education was spreading fast and was penetrating deep and deeper every day under the surface of the Hindu society. One of the first results of this education was to loosen the faith of the educated men in the religion and the traditions of their ancestors; and by the token of the irreverent talk in which some of these thoughtlessly indulged, the hopeful Christian evangelist thought he saw the spade work in the interest of

Christianity already accomplished. The next step for him was perhaps to add to the trouble by his plausible and well directed attacks upon the weak points in the system of the Hindu religion. The educated listeners, who were impressed with the methodical research, the industry and the critical faculty of the Missionaries, were told that their religion was weighed in the balance of reason and found wanting. The trick was not unoften successful and it was not quite a rare experience then to hear that this or that educated man had given up his religion and embraced Christianity. There was demoralisation in the news and the Christian Missionary, who knew it, was naturally delighted and satisfied with his own work. But his triumph did not last long. There was reaction on the heels of the short-lived triumph; and there was also Nemesis to avenge itself for the profits unrighteously reaped from the zeal of ignorance. Many of our readers may know that in this very city of Poona about thirty years ago, a band of educated men, headed by the late Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar, set themselves to counteract the mischievous work done by unwise Christian Missionaries; and pamphlets and lectures exposing the spurious 'exposure of Hinduism' flooded the land. The reaction only swelled like a snow-ball in course of time, so that the Missionary had to beat a retreat and leave the field, as it should always be left, to the very dry light of reason without which there can be no profitable discussion or controversy even in matters religious. The history of the Deccan in this respect has been repeated before or after nearly in every other province of India; and while there may now be conversion effected in the backward classes of the Hindu community, thanks to our own culpable apathy and indifference, the Missionaries have learnt to respect the strength and the grandeur of the

Hindu religion. In times like these, therefore, an attack on Christianity is likely to be regarded as an ill-timed reprisal, an unprovoked attack. It was opportune when the Missionary was on the war-path; but now the hatchet, having done its work, may well be buried out of sight.

As regards the merits of the controversy we confess very few men could regard themselves competent to pronounce upon the issues raised and argued upon therein. The average educated man has not in his possession those fundamental and elementary facts of knowledge which are essential for a proper understanding of the controversy. Who ever reads the Bible? And who ever reads the work of contemporary writers, whose mention or omission of the name of Christ and of the striking events in his life-career, may have a high probative value in proving or disproving the main issues of the controversy? Unless, therefore, the controversy is meant as a reprisal, as a strategic act of war of religious feeling, when it may be advisable to carry the war into the enemy's country, and when even a temporary triumph or a mere shifting of the laugh from one side to the other is a worthy reward, one has to take the controversy in a cautious spirit and ought not to allow himself to pass a hasty judgment thereon. When the controversy is not called for as a strategic policy, it can be allowed only as an aid to the discovery of truth; and then the sifting of evidence becomes not only a moral duty but a difficult task. One has also to remember that Christ is not the only man whose historicity is called into question. He is only one after all of the many great men, who have paid the penalty of greatness by making their very existence liable to be called in question. In a way it was *their* own fault. Why should they have been too good to be really of the earth? Was not Gautama Budha challenged, in his turn? M. Senart, the French Savant, has asserted

that no such man ever existed as Gautama Budha and that the story of his life is a mere allegorical expression of the events of the career of the Sun from the time he rises to the time he sets. The controversy in which we find it asserted that Krishna is a myth and that his idea was copied from that of Christ, is the exact counterpart of the other controversy in which the contention is raised that the Greeks carried the fame and the name of Krishna to the west and from these the name was given to Jesus. But controversies like these have raged even round the names of persons whose historicity there was hardly any reason to doubt. There is a controversy of a longstanding, the echo of which was heard even last year in the leading English journals, that the 'work of Shakespeare' was not after all the work of Shakespeare but of Lord Bacon, and that there was supposed to be in the works themselves a key to a cipher by which the authorship of Lord Verulam could be established.

As regards Christ, Thakore Kahan Chandra Varma is not the first person to raise the controversy about his historicity. The reaction of scepticism and aggressive doubting have always dogged the foot-steps of the extravagance of the doctrinal dogma. And to say that Christ never existed is just the sort of effective reply one might expect to be made to the supernatural attributes and doings attributed to Jesus. As for Jesus himself it is a good case of "Save me from my friends." To the assertion that Jesus was the Son of God, it must be an effective reply to contend that there was no Jesus, much less that he was the Son of God. The Free thinkers have done the same iconoclastic work, the same havoc in the field of cherished Christian faith, as the Missionaries attempted to do in the field of the Hindu faith. They have torn the Bible to pieces, and exposed with relentless rigour the inconsis-

tenies, contradictions, and the improbabilities in the way of giving a rational explanation of the Bible and the Gospels as a whole. Enthusiastic advocates of science like Darwin, and sceptical philosophers like Mill have made breaches in the Faith which no friendly intellectual builders have ever been able to repair. But the truth probably lay, as it always lies according to Herbert Spencer, between the two extremes. There is a comfortable half-way house between the empty abyss of myth on the one hand and the exalted throne of the Deity on the other. It is in this half-way house where reason lives and hospitably receives the refugees of the two extreme regions, that Christ may be safely located. It is the haven which is reached if the Scylla of dogmatical bias, and the Charybdis of reckless free-thought are successfully avoided. And in this abode of reason, Christ may for all time to come find a home and occupy it as a historical personage who, however, was endowed with the attributes of a hero. The historical method is likely to keep sentinel guard at the gates of this abode; and Jesus Christ will be remembered as an uncompromising reformer who suffered for his opinions. Though born of humble parents in a carpenter's family in a small neglected village and trained only among ignorant fishermen, Jesus had evidently the divine endowment of *genius* and he was fortunate enough to found a religion which now has in its fold nearly one-third of the population of the world. Even Christianity has its black sheep, perhaps there are more of them in Christianity than in any other religion. But in order to give Christianity its due meed of censure and even to shrink from it as a menace to the Hindu religion and civilisation, it is not necessary to begin by doubting the historicity of Jesus Christ. Irreverence or contempt is not the only alternative for blind idolatrous veneration. And the probabi-

lities after all point to the conclusion that such a person as Christ may have lived and breathed as surely as Rama or Krishna or the Pandavas. It may be illogical to form an idea about the dimensions of a river at its source, *from the dimensions at its mouth*. But it may be worse than illogical to argue that the river may have not a source at all. It is the same with epic heroes and founders of religions. A belief in their historicity is not only comforting but is also likely to be nearer the truth than its opposite.

(24-1-09)

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### Religion and Anarchism

All is fair in love and war, but certainly not in argument. Even Satan can quote the Bible; and we must know that *religion is good or bad as man makes it*. Most of the religions in the world have a fairly equal amount of good in it; and it is profitless for a man to claim a monopoly of the possession of good and a monopoly of the exclusion of evil for the religion to which he happens to belong. But Christian missionaries often forget this maxim of common sense. The Rev. R. F. Pearce of Bengal, speaking at the annual meeting of the Church Missionary Society recently held in London, is reported to have said that while "the Hindu religion far from restraining the evil of anarchical outrages was inclined to encourage it, it was *only Christianity* which would stem the tide of discontent and outrage." Now such an assertion may be good enough for home consumption, especially when an enthusiastic appeal for funds has to be made to a credulous congregation. The missionary work, as admitted by Bishop Lubham at the meeting, has been appreciably falling in Bombay,



Calcutta and in other places; and it is esimated that fully £1,00,000 are required to enable the missionaries in India to take advantage of the opportunities which are regarded as passing away forever. That shows the crisis with which the missionaries are face to face in India; and the troubled situation in India naturally offers an added argument in favour of Christianity. Now we have no quarrel with any missionary who honestly believes in the sovereign virtues of Christianity. But we cannot allow unchallenged any mischievous allusion to the Hindu religion such as the one made by Rev. Pearce and referred to above. The testimony of history is simply against it.

It has already been noticed by Indian writers that anarchy is an exotic in this land of the Hindus; that, to be more specific, it is *imported* into India from the West—from Christian countries. The point was not so far laboured for the obvious reason that no sane man could dispute it. But when we find Christian missionaries openly assailing the Hindu religion and claiming an ideal excellence for Christianity we must take the matter out from the indifference with which it was treated in more political polemics, and must also do a bit of plain speaking. For we really believe that if Christianity be introduced into India, it will be so much the worse for England. It is only because India consists of mild god-fearing Hindus and such pious Brahmins that England has been able to retain India. If it consisted of flesh-eating Christians, their murderous instinct would sooner have shown itself in a painful manner, and India would have been worse than Ireland or Russia. What the Hindu gains in point of religion he loses in point of practical politics; and woe to England if Indians were as politically wise, ambitious and assertive as the average Christian in any European country.

Ransack the records of Hinduism however carefully you may, you will not find in it either that disregard for human life—much less that justification and glorification of murder—which you find in the annals of the Christian Church. Is Rev Mr. Pearce ignorant of the murders instigated by Jesuits and committed in the name of Christianity? Is he ignorant of Mariana, the scholastic Jesuit who takes for his text the assassination of Henry III of France by Clement, and openly justifies it? Need we tell him that Mariana has actually related, in a tone of evident admiration, how this Clement who was a young Dominican impelled by a religious enthusiasm, who having fortified his courage by the services of the Church, had contrived to obtain an interview with the King and stabbed him to death with a poisoned knife and himself fallen beneath the sword of the attendants? And what were the words of this Christian Mariana in judgment upon this murder? "Thus," he says, "did Clement perish as many deem to the eternal honour of France—a youth but four and twenty years of age, simple in mind and weak in body; but a higher might confirmed both his courage and his strength!" Look at these words, Mr. Pearce!

In examining the moral character of this act, Lecky tells us in his *History of Rationalism in Europe* (vol. II) that there was 'a great division of opinion'! Very many extolled it as worthy of immortality, others, however, whose learning and sagacity were not to be despised, severely condemned it. Mariana in his treatise has examined the arguments against the murder and deliberately says: "the champions of the people could urge others that are not less numerous or less powerful." The common voice, he says, of mankind had enrolled the great tyrannicides of the past among the noblest of mankind "Who," says he, "ever censured the acts or failed to

admire the heroism of Harmodius or Aristogeiton, or Brutus, or of those who freed their land from the tyranny of a Domician, of a Caracalla, or a Heliogabalas? And what was this common sentiment but the voice of nature that is within us, teaching us to distinguish what is right from what is wrong? If some ferocious beast had been let loose upon the land and was devastating all around him, who would hesitate to applaud the man, who, at the risk of his life, had ventured to slay it? Or what words would be too strong to brand the coward who remained a passive spectator while his mother or the wife of his soil was torn and crushed? Yet the most average animal is but an inadequate image of a tyrant, and neither wife nor mother has so high a claim upon our affection as our country.' Look at these words of a Christian, Mr Pearce! The task, says Mariana, of distinguishing between different cases, was an easy one. Thus the tyrant may be a conqueror who by force of arms and without any appeal to the people had obtained possession of the sovereign power; in that case," says Mariana, "there is no obscurity. The example of Ehud was a guide, and the tyrant might be justly slain by any of the people. ... If the king who had degenerated into a tyrant, had suppressed the right of assembly no steps should be taken unless the tyranny was flagrant, unquestionable and intolerable. But if this were so, the individual who, interpreting the wishes of the people slew the sovereign, should be applauded!" So on and so on, *ad nauseam*. Mariana indeed recognises that few tyrants among the great multitude can be slain in this way. "But it is," says Mariana, "a salutary thought for Princes to dwell upon that if they oppress their people and make themselves intolerable by their vices, to slay them is not only without guilt but is an act of the highest

merit." Are not these the words of a Christian, Mr. Pearce?

Now there is no question as to the perverse and untenable character of all these vicious views. And all right-minded men will agree with Lecky in the following wise remarks, which he indicts after making all possible allowance for "the charming and fascinating character of Mariana's doctrine, especially to men who are justly emerging out of protracted servitude." Says Lecky:—"To those who take a wider view of the field of politics, the immense danger of encouraging individuals to make themselves the arbiters of the destinies of a nation, will be far more than sufficient to counterbalance these arguments. The degree of favour that public opinion shows to political assassinations, though by no means the sole, is perhaps the principal regulator of their number. .... The amount of heroism it evokes is no test or measure of the excellence of a cause. Indeed nothing can be more certain than that the highest displays of courage, enthusiasm and self-sacrifice are usually elicited not by those motives of general philanthropy which all men must applaud, but by attachment to some particular class of disputed questions or to the interests of some particular party! Political assassination must be denounced as an atrocious crime simply because in the great majority of instances it is so; and even in the extremely few cases that are generally recognised as exceptions, we have to deduct from the immediate advantages that were obtained, the evil of an example that has been misused."

There is no question of the soundness of the above views so ably put forth by Lecky. But the immediate point is that the discussion itself, to which Lecky has seen fit to give so much space in his *History of Rationalism in Europe*, completely proves that far from Christian people

being free from the taint of outrage, the history of Christianity during certain periods bears only conclusive testimony on the other side. In the 16th century a large number of attempts were made upon the lives of rulers by Christian fanatics, and "nearly all were produced by attachment to certain *religious* opinions which the conspirator desired to see predominate and from which opinions an immense number of people dissented " Is Rev. Mr. Pearce aware that when Henry III was assassinated by Clement, the Catholics of the League received the news with a burst of undisguised exultation, and in many churches the image of the murderer was placed for reverence upon the altar of God ? The Pope publicly pronounced the act to be worthy of ranking with that of Judith; he said that it could only have been accomplished by the special assistance of Providence and he blasphemously compared it to the Incarnation and to the Resurrection !

Of course the Roman Catholics were on the whole more often guilty of such fanatical outrages in the name of religion than Protestants. But the Protestants too were not completely free from the taint. Who does not remember that the murderers of the Duke of Guise in France and of Cardinal Beaton in Scotland were Protestant Christians and that the deed was justified by most eminent Protestants at the time ? The murder of Archbishop Sharp in Scotland in 1679 is an instance of the murder of one Protestant by another, only in the name of advanced Protestantism. Protestantism gave an impulse to the spirit of insubordination, strengthened by the republican form of the new Protestant organisation. Protestantism itself was a spiritual rebellion—an appeal from those in authority to the judgment of the people. "Tyrannicide" says Lecky, "occupied an extremely prominent place in the revival of Liberalism." What a sorry spectacle for Christianity and

for Mr. Pearce! It is but fair on the other hand to recognise that in the early history of Christianity we come across Christians who were free from this taint of murderous instincts. What cause for resistance could possibly have been more just than the persecutions of a Nero or a Diocletian? Yet it was in the reign of Nero that St. Paul inculcated in unequivocal language the doctrine of *Passive obedience*. We may similarly cite the name of our own contemporary Russian Philosopher, Leo Tolstoy, who is a Christian but would under no conceivable circumstances sanction the use of physical force or outrage.

The moral from all this is, we believe, obvious. Christianity or Hinduism or any religion for that matter will be as it will be made by its adherents. No true religion ever sanctioned anarchical outrages, much less did Hinduism; and if any such be committed by the adherents of any religion even in its name, let the wise and thoughtful critic remember that he ought to hold the individual and not the religion responsible for it. The Rev. Mr. Pearce is, in our opinion, guilty of gross blasphemy when he says that Hinduism is inclined to encourage outrages and anarchy. And the sooner he apologises for his offence the better for him as a Christian! (2-10-10)

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### Prof. R. P. Paranjpe on Religious Education

The maiden article, contributed to the May number of the *East and West* by our only Indian Senior Wrangler is most unfortunate. And this to say the least of it. The article is crude in conception and illogical in expression; and we doubt whether it would have been received with anything better than silent censure were it not that it emanates from one of the best educated of Indians. Much

adventitious importance is also likely to attach to Prof. Paranjpe's performance owing to the fact that he stands at the head of one of our most prominent private educational institutions, and that it is in connection with such institutions in particular that the question of religious education is receiving public attention just at this time. "F. G. S.," by whom we mean a well-known and respectable European Principal of a local Government College, writing to the *Times of India* of the 19th instant, characterises Mr. Paranjpe's article as an illustration of "the tendency of the mathematical mind to argue from premises accepted without question." We know that mathematical genius is often found to be dangerously near to eccentricity or an extremely one-sidedness of mind; and Prof. Paranjpe might have well claimed to exercise the mathematician's privilege to be let alone "to shine *eccentric* like a comet's blaze." But unfortunately our friend has allowed himself to be saddled too soon with the grave responsibilities of the Principal of his College and the guiding pole star to his students, and he cannot expect the public and the guardian-world concerned to shew an indulgent indifference to whatever views he publicly adumbrates. The mathematical studies of the College students afford, we believe, scope enough for indulging in the pleasant pursuit of drawing strict logical conclusions from "premises accepted without question," however absurd they may be or appear. Thus a mathematician may safely tell his students that a zero can be proved to be and is, therefore, equal to two or that parallel straight lines meet each other at infinity. But it is a question whether in dealing with matters concerning the vital interests of the student world as members of their society, he may be allowed to make logic play the ass by first making questionable assumptions and then drawing absurd conclusions from them.

The sum and substance of Prof. Paranjpe's article comes to this. It is regarded unpatriotic to talk against cherished popular opinions in India as much as in other nations. But while opportunity for practical work acts as an automatic check on visionary dispositions in other countries in India there is no such check. In European countries the tendency is actually to discourage religious education in Schools and Colleges, and the results of the heroic attempt that is being made by Mrs. Besant at Benares are yet to be demonstrated. But even speaking *a priori* Schools and Colleges are not the institutions where religious or even moral education may be given. In India, moreover, the difficulty, according to Prof. Paranjpe, is all the greater, because here morality is based on religion and religion itself a mass of superstitions and social evils. Education in the Hindu religion *e. g.* cannot be given unless one accentuates caste differences; and such accentuation must hamper the progress of the spirit of nationality in India where the Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsees and all have to go together towards a higher political ideal. The above will show the quality of the opinions expressed by Prof. Paranjpe, and for the sake of expressing such views as these he has spent all the momentum of the moral courage which he thinks he has in him as the result of a youthful and enthusiastic imitation of Herbert Spencer ! We know that it has been now-a-days a fashion with some perverse-minded men to affect a liking for the opprobrious epithet of 'unpatriotic.' But Prof. Paranjpe might as well have kept his moral courage for a better cause than an impulsive and unthoughtful condemnation of religious education, nay of religion itself. For did not even Spencer himself deem it wise to prohibit the publication of his unpatriotic advice to Japan ( to keep the foreigners at arm's length ) till after his death ? So



also had not his autobiography to be published only as a posthumous work though it was actually in print long before ? And yet what does it contain that may not be said by a ripe philosopher and a gentleman ? And on the other hand what is there in favour of Professor Paranjpe's views except perhaps that they are a reckless contradiction of the admittedly popular and patriotic views on the subject ? Perhaps the greatest inducement to an Indian of the present day to indulge in the pleasure of making a regular creed of blind opposition to all that is popular and patriotic is that it is self-complacent and safe at the same time. In India, just at present, you can say anything you like of your society and your religion with impunity. The arm of the Penal Code is too short and the arm of the public opinion too long to reach such a delinquent. The unpatriotic attempt does not kick back like the attempt to fire a bad gun. But an appeal to our friend's good sense will not, we think, be altogether in vain; and we do hope the next time he writes on an important subject like this he will shew a more thoughtful and less impulsive turn of mind.

The reply which F. G. S. has given to Prof. Paranjpe is important owing to the fact that the writer is generally not a supporter or a sympathiser of Indian movements which Prof. Paranjpe dreads simply because they are popular and regarded as patriotic. The light which F. G. S. throws on the question is a severely dry light, and there is every reason to suppose that his opinion is given on the general question of religion and religious education without any advertance to this or that movement or person or institution concerned therein. And our only regret is that a foreigner should be able to see the bearings of the situation on the question at issue more clearly and correctly than such an intelligent Indian and a born Hindu as Prof.

Paranjpe is. F. G. S. wonders at Prof. Paranjpe identifying religion with popular superstition and regards him to be quite ignorant of the movement of religious thought both in India and in Europe. F. G. S. correctly understands that in speaking of religious education its advocates do not mean by religion its most superficial and superstitious aspect but classical religion. He recognises that Indians have conceived the possibility of finding a system of religious and moral truth, which, even if actively taught need not necessarily deepen the line of cleavage between the different Indian nationalities, and that they would altogether repudiate Prof. Paranjpe's immature and childish idea that religion can never for their countrymen mean anything higher or better than falsehood, injustice and immorality. He reminds Prof. Paranjpe that a man may be religious without being unscientific, unjust or immoral, that is to say, religious education if given in Schools or Colleges would not necessarily militate against or nullify the effect of the intellectual and moral culture given therein. But by far the most effective point made by F. G. S. is when he says that 'in our College class-rooms lecturers in philosophy even now discuss the foundation and nature of religious belief and of morality.' This evidently means that what Prof. Paranjpe regards as being impossible and undesirable is being actually practised and approved in some form and to a certain extent.

The position taken by Prof. Paranjpe is most unfortunate and yet most vulnerable. By admitting the principle of the desirability of or even expressing a toleration for religious education and exposing the wide field of details on which difference of opinion is quite possible, Prof. Paranjpe might have perhaps done enough for his purpose. For we do regard it as a vexed question whether in any scheme of religious education it may be allowed.

to insert a responsible attack on or defence of the caste system for example. Even the Vedant, again, has two schools of opinion; and very probably not even the most sincere advocate of religious education will, in our opinion, take the responsibility of including in his practical scheme books on the Dwaita or the Adwaita-philosophy exclusively. So also he would not make the untenable attempt to decide to give a pronounced preference for any one over the other or the others of the six recognised systems of philosophy. And the reason is obvious. For if he knows the principles of Hinduism sufficiently well, he would regard all these as matters of unimportant detail and content himself with providing for an education in those broad and all-acceptable principles only. But Prof. Paranjpe, while mistaking the details for the principles and the shadow for the substance, ambitiously aims his blow at religion itself and exposes the broadside of an immature and impulsive mind which knows no responsibility. Prof. Paranjpe is evidently culturist bordering on atheism. And we doubt whether the indispensable common ground exists between him and any advocates of religious education. The proper conditions for a fair and regular controversy, therefore, hardly exist in this case. Professor Paranjpe's individual beliefs and opinions can of course concern no member of the public, but the fact that he is the head of an important College calls for notice being taken of the situation created by the co-existence though accidental of his beliefs and his position in relation to society. And for this reason only we think it our duty to condemn his views as wrong and calculated to injure the best interests of that section of the student-world that might come within his sphere of influence. We need hardly state that the consensus of the best thinkers of the past and the present is that mere culture is not every thing

and that every true culture must be combined with religion. The first mistake is to suppose that culture and religion are conflicting and the second and the graver mistake is to suppose that in such a conflict religion must yield to culture. As Principal Shairp has neatly put it in addressing the students of the United College of St. Andrews, "culture and religion are not when rightly regarded two opposite powers, but they are as it were one line with opposite poles. Start from the manward pole and go along the line honestly and thoroughly and you land in the divine one. Start from the divine pole and carry out all that it implies and you will land in the manward pole or the perfection of humanity. Ideally considered, then, culture must culminate in religion and religion must expand into culture."

(22-4 1901)

## Religious Education

### I

#### *Suggestions towards a Practical Scheme*

Excepting a few iconoclastic and sturdy champions of materialism all Educationists of repute are agreed as to the imperative need of imparting religious education in our schools and colleges. Government authorities and Government Commissions of course stand neutral and try to belittle if not entirely ignore and deprecate the need of all religious education whatever. This is hardly to be wondered at. Government has its hands overfull with many administrative problems which require very delicate and skilful handling. That Government officials should stand aloof and look on with distrust at a new experiment which they have neither the will nor the capacity to guide or control, is, in the nature of things, quite an ordinary

spectacle. But even if Government flinches shy of the thorny problem of religious education in India, that is no reason why private individuals and private associations who have the advancement of the proper sort of education at heart, should sit dumb-founded and only advance so far as to merely discuss in academic fashion the need of religious education. That the question of religious education is not very easy of solution and that it bristles with practical and theoretical difficulties may readily be granted. But because we do not at present possess a workable scheme of religious education, we should perpetually assume an attitude of indifference, is a view of the question which will find favour only with the advocates of the policy of 'masterly inactivity.' It is not for us to blame Government in the matter. Let Government assume an attitude of neutrality, even of armed neutrality towards the question of religious education. That it is not openly hostile is sufficient for our present purpose. It is for us to look at the question in all its bearings and having subjected it to the search-light of practical reasoning and practical suggestion, to find out whether we cannot devise a plan which will serve the end we have in view. It will necessitate much debate and a variety of conflicting suggestions and proposals before we arrive at a cast iron system of religious education which may be finally received with open arms in all kinds of educational institutions. By way of giving the hitherto profitless and academic discussion a decidedly practical turn, we shall attempt to roughly formulate a working scheme which will at least point the right direction in which we ought to proceed if we are finally to arrive at our promised destination. For the present, we will confine our attention solely to the requirements of the Hindu religion and try to find out whether we cannot offer a number of suggestions which even if

they are not sufficient to fully constitute a new scheme, will, nevertheless, go far towards making such an attempt in the end eminently feasible.

To those who have perhaps not given a thought to the matter and whose minds are irretrievably weighed down with the materialistic knowledge of practical and experimental sciences like physics and mathematics, religion may seem to be of the nature of a 'bundle of superstitious ideas.' We may here, however, take the liberty to point out that it is only the veritable tyro fresh from the triumphs of the examination room who questions the inspiring and ennobling influence of religious fervour. To Carlyle, who, we are afraid, is hardly a *persona grata* with mathematical heroes, a man's religion is the 'main fact about him.' But we may ignore for the nonce what every fresh arrival from England thinks of the efficacy of religion in moulding national character, for we may take Burke's word for it that no new discoveries are to be made in the domains of morals and religion. Taking it for granted that religion of all moral forces is the strongest that goes to give a national character an abiding dignity and stability we shall endeavour to decide in what form it ought to be presented to the youthful and impressionable minds of the school-going population.

When it is suggested that some sort of religious education should be made compulsory in all schools and colleges no one understands by that statement that religion in its crude and most travestied form, should form the subject of such instruction. No religion in the world, neither Hinduism, nor Mahomedanism, nor Christianity nor Buddhism is strictly speaking a 'bundle of superstitious ideas.' Every one of these great religions in its highest and purest form contains the most sublime truths which through thick and thin, through good report and through evil report, will

endure unchanged and unchangeable to the end of the world. That all these great religions at the present day should have come to be associated with superstitious ideas is due solely to the fact that the modern world does not pay much attention to religious teaching, and amidst an overwhelming amount of the secular kind of education no scope is at all given for the religious instincts of the human race to have free play. It is just because most of the great religions of the world, as a result of the criminal neglect which is persistently shown towards their development and growth, have recently come to lose their ancient purest form and are every day tending to become 'a bundle of superstitious ideas,' that the need of systematised religious instruction becomes so crying and so imperative. Because all religions are in the sad predicament of soon falling into ill repute we must beware betimes and take such measures as will avert the impending catastrophe. To educate the rising generation to duly appreciate the importance of religious influence in shaping life's destiny, to make the young men of a country feel the ennobling and humanising effects of religious fervour and to enable them to steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of Atheism and Agnosticism—those two cankers which imperceptibly eat into the heart of the latter-day generation of secularly educated young men and dry up all the inborn moisture of piety and devotion of the human mind—ought to be the goal towards which all the energy and enthusiasm of religiously minded educationists should be uncompromisingly directed. In these days, not the blindest advocate of religious instruction will contend that ritual and formal religious practices, which differ in every sect and in every locality and which possess more a social and conventional significance than a religious one, ought to form part of the religious instruction that is to find its place in the

curricula of schools and colleges. Religion in its highest and purest form, purged of all the accumulated rust of superstition and divested of all the crude and 'unreasoned' interpretations which have well nigh distorted and mutilated it out of recognition, has strong claims on the sympathy of the educational institutions of a big country and it may form part of the training which is given to the young men of every new generation at an enormous cost to the national exchequer.

Our readers must already be aware that an attempt is already being made by the trustees of the Central Hindu College at Benares, under the guidance and advice of Mrs. Annie Besant, than whom no one has given a closer attention to the solution of the problem, to give a systematic religious instruction to the students who attend the various primary and high schools under their control. As yet this attempt is in an experimental stage and if according to some self-opinionated critics there are *a priori* grounds to suppose that the experiment is bound to prove a failure, there is also much *a posteriori* evidence in support of the belief that this experiment even if it does not prove an entire success, will at least pave the way for more systematic and more vigorous efforts which will finally end in giving religious education a recognised and firm status in the general scheme of India's national educational institutions. The trustees of the Central Hindu College have prepared and published a series of three graduated books which treat in a succinct and clear manner all the non-controversial and generally recognised doctrines of the Sanatan Dharma which means nothing more or less than what is usually designated by the more familiar name of Hinduism. Of course Hinduism differs in most important particulars from Christianity and Mahomedanism. The doctrines of *Karma* and of rebirth, the belief in the manifestations of



God-head at every grave crisis; and the idea of the final absorption of the whole universe into Brahma when no duality will remain, these and many other cognate and co-related religious ideas are the peculiar creation and the highly valued possession of the people of Hindustan. Buddhism alone, which again is an offshoot of the Sanatan Dharma, shares these ideas in common with Hinduism. We fail to understand why a man who fervently believes in the doctrine of *Karma* and re-birth should by the very fact of such a belief be in any way inimically disposed towards the followers of Mahomet or of Christ. Indeed all fanatical hatred and hostility displayed by Christians and Mahomedans, towards followers of a different religious persuasion, is singularly absent from the annals of Sanatan Dharma, which has a history extending far into the vistas of antiquity and the beginnings of which were synchronous with the very creation of the world. Of all the religions in this world Hinduism has ever been the most tolerant. We burnt no heretics, we did not persecute with fire and sword followers of other religions who, staunch in their forefathers' belief, refused to embrace our ideals. Even Vedantic missionaries who proceed to America never display any the least hostile attitude towards Christianity and without being in an unseemly hurry to add to our numbers by converting all and sundry they only dispassionately point out the imperfections and weak points of the Christian faith. That such a religion, the proud patrimony which has descended to us through *Yugas* and *Kalpas* should be stigmatised as a 'bundle of superstitious ideas' shows really a lamentable want of the gravity and the considerateness with which the very discussion of such questions is to be approached. Religion indeed seems to be inseparable from superstition. Superstition is lurking under every form of religion, Christianity

is falling a prey to its insidious encroachments. Mahomedanism is already full of it. Buddhism in its wide-spread form has lost its original purity owing to the enormous influence superstition exercises over people inhabiting Budhistic lands. Hinduism of course has its due share of superstition even at the present day. But because superstition during the course of centuries travesties and corrupts the original purity of all religious teaching that is no ground for suppressing and ignoring all religious instruction whatever. Indeed the systematic teaching of religion in its purest form is the only corrective which will succeed in liberating religion from the contaminating influences of superstition and other corrupting agencies

But to leave all these debatable considerations apart, it will be profitable to inquire what should be taught and what should not be taught to young students undergoing a well regulated course of religious training. That all ritual and all ceremonial rites and practices should be carefully eschewed goes without saying. Indeed all ritual is only a secondary and the least important item in the healthy growth of religious belief. What we shall have to do in Schools and Colleges will be to teach the theory of religion apart from the practice of it. Examined from this standpoint the series of books published by the Board of the Central Hindu College trustees are found to offend in one most important particular. They give esoteric explanations of many Hindu rites and ceremonies and these explanations, however original or ingenious, will hardly meet with general acceptance from all devout Hindus. Excepting this important particular the books contain a lucid and unobjectionable exposition of many doctrines and notions which are pre-eminently Hindu. The Hindu religion in its highest form being essentially an outcome of Hindu Philosophy, the study of Hinduism

differs but little if at all from a study of the different Hindu systems of philosophy. The six systems of Hindu philosophy are, as a matter of fact, briefly summarised in the two higher books of the Central Hindu College Series and the only fault we can find with the summary is that it is rather too scanty and meagre to be of much practical benefit in giving to the young student a definite idea of their main propositions. However, a capable teacher will be able to supplement this material defect from his personal knowledge and much will depend on the method of exposition the teacher follows in the school-room.

## II

In our last article we cleared the ground by disposing of the many ingenious objections that openly question the very need and efficacy of religious education. Now we shall come to details and lay down the ground-plan of the general scheme of religious education, on which the practical educationist is to erect his noble structure four square to all opposition. It goes without saying that the kind of religious education which is to be given to school boys will differ largely from that to be given to the College classes. Much of the religious instruction in schools will consist of dogma pure and simple. The school-boy will have to be told dogmatically that there is God, that He is all powerful and that it is absolutely necessary for us to bow down in submission to Him. This will hardly result in smothering the spirit of inquiry that is necessary for the pursuit of all intelligent study of scientific subjects. Even when school-boys are being taught mathematics nobody thinks of allowing them to have a free discussion over the definitions of the fundamental ideas which are necessary for even an elementary knowledge of the subject. The definitions of a line, a

point, or a plane are as incomprehensible to the ordinary school-boy as the existence of God Himself. So when we say that the *primary religious ideas* are to be communicated to the youthful mind of the school-going population in the form of a dogma, we are not, we believe, demanding any very unreasonable amount of indulgence in favour of religious instruction. Of course the school-boy who wants an *ocular proof* of the existence of God will have to be caned into silence, just as the boy who would not proceed to the demonstration of the first proposition in Euclid without first having to his mind a completely satisfactory explanation of the definition of a line, will have to be cajoled into submission.

Just as the existence of God is a matter which is not to be made the subject of free discussion and argumentation in the school-room, so the other fundamental ideas of every religion, as for instance in the case of Hinduism, the belief in avatars, and in the Vedas as being the true revelation, is to be gradually inculcated on the minds of the school-boys without much fuss being made about its being vulnerable or invulnerable to the shafts of logic and reason. The Primer of Sanatan Dharma compiled by the authorities of the Central Hindu College is composed principally with the intention of making school-boys acquainted with the basic ideas of their religious faith. Of course if a school-boy when he grows to manhood shows signs of developing into a very ardent philosopher, he will be at liberty to openly question the fundamental ideas of any religion or to challenge God Himself to a personal combat. But when we formulate a scheme of religious instruction we have necessarily to leave out of account intellectual prodigies and genii who freeing themselves from the trammels of a cast-iron system, will prefer to be law unto themselves. No educational

system, neither a religious one nor a secular one, was ever devised with the intention of suppressing genius. Every educational system takes into account only those who will be amenable to its provisions.

But we need not dwell longer on the consideration of what is to be taught in schools. Whatever is to be taught in the colleges will have only to be simplified to its primary notions to be made a suitable subject of instruction in the schools. The word 'religion,' at all times and in all places connotes three very fundamental ideas. These are the existence and nature of God, the existence and nature of the human soul and the relation which subsists or which ought to subsist between God and the human soul or to speak in the phraseology of Vedanta, the relation which ought to subsist between *Jivatman* and *Paramatman*. All religions in the world are agreed despite the latter day fulminations of Atheists, Materialists and Agnostics, as to the existence of God and the existence of the human soul. The centre of contention lies in the determination of the exact nature of God-head and the relation which the human soul bears to *Paramatman* or the 'One only without a second.' Hinduism looks upon the *Paramatman* as impersonal, and so does Buddhism. But Christianity and Mahomedanism look upon God as personal and upon Christ and Mahomet as the only manifestations of Him. But Hinduism or our Sanatan Dharma goes behind the personal God of the Christians and the Mahomedans and makes its *Paramatman* impersonal the same time that it looks upon the various Avatars as the personal manifestations of that Highest and Absolute Entity. So the ideal text-book of Hindu religion will have to be divided principally into three main divisions—the first treating of the Hindu idea of God pointing out at the same time how that idea includes and overlaps the Christian and

Mahomedan conceptions of God-head. The second great division of the book should treat of the nature and limitations of the human soul and the third great division or chapter of the book will have to deal with the all important and practically useful question of the relation which subsists or ought to subsist between the human soul and *Parama'mm*. This third chapter will also include all ethical considerations of human conduct and thus will try to supply the Science of Ethics with a purely religious foundation. Indeed the great defect of modern education is that it tries to divorce morality from religion. Blind to the primary position that morality could have no binding force unless it had the solid foundation of religious belief, positivists, materialists, and agnostics of the nineteenth century sought in vain to constitute convenience or utility the sole arbiter between right and wrong. Utilitarian philosophers were indeed for a time looked upon as the saviours of humanity. But it soon became apparent to the general sense of the community that conduct admittedly immoral and unjust could very well satisfy all the conditions and texts of utilitarian ethics and even in England and America there is now a revulsion in feeling in favour of making religion the sole sanction and justification of the long recognised codes of moral conduct.

Even at the present day the students of the higher classes in colleges have to read a little portion of the Rig-Ved and some students choose as their optional subject some portion of Vedanta philosophy. But the number of such students is very small. Though Indian philosophy is based on Hindu religious ideas, it will not be profitable to study Hindu philosophy as a preparation for the study of the Hindu religion. In the first place all philosophical text-books are written in the very stiff and conventional phraseology which takes a good deal of time and

energy to master. So instead of asking all students to read Sanskrit philosophy it will be better by far to compile a book in English which in simple language will summarise all the main positions of the various systems of Indian philosophy and to prescribe it as a text-book to be read in the college classes. Philosophy is always for the few. Only those who are ready to undergo a great deal of extra mental exertion will be able to master all intricate systems of philosophy. But religion must be for all and the best way of giving competent knowledge of religion to young students is to present to them religious tenets in their simplest form. This can be done only by means of a text-book composed on the lines we have laid down.

In compiling a text-book of the Hindu religion such as we have described, attention must also be paid to the gradual growth and development of religion. So the book, in addition to the exposition of the main doctrines of Hindu religion, must also contain an historical account of the Sanatan Dharma. Certainly all the ideas which we now find prevailing in Hinduism and which we prize as our very dear and precious possession were not there from the very beginning of time. Religion is a slow growth, especially a religion like Hinduism which embraces within its folds all sorts and conditions of religious ideas that ever were evolved out of the restless energy of the active brains of the sons of men. To take a concrete instance, the idea of *Karma* had not a very strong hold on the Indian mind before Buddha lived and preached his gospel of piety and Nirvana. Hinduism with its remarkable adaptability and capacity for assimilating all that is worthy of assimilation in other religions has an historical significance which if at all it is duly appreciated, will present a spectacle which few other religions are

capable of doing. So much with regard to the historical study of religion. A little attention will also have to be paid to the comparative study of religion. The followers of every religion claim that their creed is superior in some respect to all other religions. Hindu lecturers and writers often speak of the undoubted superiority which Hinduism in their opinion possesses over Christianity and Mahomedanism. To examine whether this assumption of superiority is well warranted by facts or is only a vainglorious boast, it will be necessary to dive a little into the tenets of Christianity and Mahomedanism. Christians and Mahomedans, for instance, maintain that Christ or Mahomet respectively was the only human incarnation of God-head. Hinduism, on the contrary, takes a very broad and liberal view of the matter and far from looking on only one or two remarkable personages as the only manifestations of God, openly admits the possibility of there being an Avatar whenever the need for such is sorely felt in any grave crisis. In this and in many other particulars Hinduism obviously has a superiority over other religions. These must be pointed out in the dispassionate attitude of a disinterested seeker after truth and must never be allowed to degenerate into the war cry of a militant religious propaganda solely carried on for the purpose of vanquishing opponents and securing new converts or recruits.

A chapter of such a book as we have described must also treat of the various ways in which it is possible for man to hold communion with God and to be in 'tune with the infinite.' These methods of religious devotion, of course, differ in all great religions and Hinduism alone is full of a variety of them. These ways are of course too numerous to mention Bhakti Yoga, Dnyan Yoga, Concentration, Prayer—all these are some of the recognised methods of religious



devotion. Of course it will depend principally on every man's own inclinations and mental equipment as to the choice he is to make with regard to the particular method he wants to actually practise. The object of putting before the student all these various methods is to call his attention to their relative merits and it will not be the business of the teacher to extol one to the detriment of another. If effect is given in practice to some of the suggestions we have put forward we have every reason to believe that we shall soon be in a fair way to see a system of religious instruction an accomplished fact ere long. It will certainly be a profitless task to go about trying to convince those who simply on *a priori* grounds seek to ignore and decry the necessity as well as the efficacy of even the most non-sectarian religious instruction.

(3604)

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### What Our Literary Men Should Do

All the Indian Universities every year turn out hundreds of graduates in the different branches of higher education. But it is most saddening to observe that a very small percentage of this large number keep all through life a real love of learning. More than seventy-five percent of our educated men enter Government employment even at a time when they have to join the public service on a pay which is not sufficient to feed two months. Of course they condescend to accept these unattractive jobs for want of any more profitable field of employment and as state employment alone assures them of more than a respectable income in middle life and towards old age. The rest twenty-five percent of our graduates practise the professions for which they are qualified. But they always move in the old and worn out grooves. Very few of them dis-

play any genuine fondness for profound study and original work in the scientific side of their profession. Their main endeavour is somehow to eke out a decent living and to leave all ambitious and original work to be done by Europeans. We shall explain what we mean by citing a few concrete instances. All the medical graduates of our University either enter State employment or carry on a private medical practice which brings them a decent pecuniary return. But nobody thinks of establishing a big laboratory or factory, where all sorts of drugs and chemicals which have a medicinal value will be prepared and manufactured in large quantities. All our practising physicians have to import the commonest drugs and even the crudest and simplest preparations from European and American firms. Our physicians, even the most capable of them, are only to write out a prescription and order the patient to take a certain dose of the stuff usually called a 'mixture.' This habit betokens an utter want of initiative and enterprise and a helplessness only to be met with among people, who by force of habit or surroundings have become incapable of breaking new ground in any department of human activity.

As with the physicians so with the lawyers. Our law graduates are always ready to enter the judicial department on a starving monthly pittance or to carry on a vain struggle for existence at the bar which is every day becoming more and more crowded and holds out hopes of prospective gain only to the most patient, most industrious and the most capable of our superfluous legal luminaries. But few of these will turn their attention to the advanced study of legal learning which may finally enable its votary to write learned treatises on the different branches of law. Very capable legal writers in England and also in India succeed in clearing off enormous profits,

With our lawyers and physicians, all other graduates of our universities, with a purely literary training, are equal sinners in the utter want of originality, imagination and creative genius which they have persistently betrayed. Englishmen are very fond of reading tales of Indian life and some of them go in for a study of Indian history also. Our highly educated young men spend as many as twelve years in studying the English language. Year in, year out, from morn till eve they are steeped in the intricacies of English and by the end of their academic career they probably read through half a dozen choice works of standard authors. They read poetry, they read plays, insipid novels they read by the score. But how many of them have acquired at least a moderate command over English or cultivated a tolerably elegant style of original composition which may pass muster with none too fastidious readers or critics? So far as we are aware there are only one or two Indians who have written tales of Indian life in English. One is Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, the Doyen of Bengali civilians and he of course adorns everything that he puts his hand to. He is equally brilliant and engaging as a political controversialist or as a historian of Indian antiquities, or as a translating poet or an original novelist. The other is one Mr. Sarat Kumar Ghose who has made his name famous by writing sensational and thrilling tales of Indian romance in various monthly periodicals in England. But beyond these two men we know of none else who has even made an attempt in this direction. English readers still gather their ideas of Indian life from Meadows Taylor's *Tara* and *Seeta*. There is no Indian writer who has yet tried to interpret the East to Western people and recently Englishmen have come to regard Mr. Rudyard Kipling's fantastic yarns as truly representing the inexplicable character of all oriental life. With Mr. Kipling's

as standard books on legal subjects are always very highly priced and command a ready and uninterrupted sale. But to write a really comprehensive and authoritative book on any one of the various important departments of law, is a work which calls into requisition a very patient study of the whole literature on the subject and also a very clear and analytical mind capable of appreciating and explaining the minutest distinctions and subtleties on the authority of which most momentous issues are sometimes decided. It is more than half a century since our Universities first began to turn out legal graduates. But beyond a few names we do not find any Indian lawyer who has mastered any particular branch of legal lore and given the benefit of his erudition and scholarship to humbler fellow workers in the same line. To take only one glaring instance it is certainly very strange that the only authoritative book on Hindu Law should be the production of an English lawyer. A few books on Hindu Law written by Hindus have recently been published and though they are good in their own way, they fall immeasurably short of what Mr. Mayne has succeeded in bringing together in his monumental work. In pre English times there were so many Hindu lawyers who had attained a perfect skill in subtle argumentation that their treatises and commentaries would by themselves constitute a very respectable legal library. But we now seem to have fallen on degenerate days. All our law graduates are only to be petty-fogging lawyers. If we except the names of Mr. Hukumchand and perhaps of Sir Guru Das Bannerjee and Rajkumar Sarvadhikari, there seems to be no lawyer of the latter day generation ready to give much of his time to the exploration of the illimitable field of legal lore, and especially of Hindu law. In such a state of things Mr. Mayne's book holds its own unchallenged. So far as High Court made Hindu law is con-

not by Kiplings and Taylors, but they will have to come direct from the pen of Indian writers. And here at least the Indians have before them an almost unbounded and very promising field of literary endeavour. Some capable and ambitious writers have only to make the attempt and in no time they will be in the unchallenged occupation of the whole field.

What we have said of novels and other works of fiction is equally applicable to historical writing. Indian History at least up to the English conquest ought properly speaking to be written by natives of India. Englishmen try to write the history of many memorable events in India's past. But they are not fitted by traditions and education to deal sympathetically with Indian events. They cannot appreciate the true significance of the historical evidence which they assiduously accumulate. This province of literary work ought also to be pre-eminently a close preserve of the Indian intellect. The very magnitude and difficulty of the task ought to allure some of our ambitious intellects to follow in the path which Gibbon and Macaulay 'trod before.' The historical instinct is said to be totally non-existent in the Indian mind. It is for Indians versed in western lore and western methods of systematic study to wipe off that perpetual reproach by planning and executing monumental works on Indian History which will present the romantic doings of India's storied past to the admiring gaze of the western people.

17-7-06

### Need of Public Schools of Rhetoric

If we care to look at the history of the advance of constitutional government we shall at once be struck with the fact that the fabric of that history has been raised on

which such public speakers will receive a scientific and systematic training in the very useful art of public declamation. The educated classes in India who voice forth the sentiments and the aspirations of the people in the yearly congress meetings are fighting for the establishment in India of a popular and constitutional form of government. But with us in India politics have been a recent growth. As the Hon. Professor Gokhale has more than once complained politics in India so far have been mainly amateurish. All who have a craving for notoriety, all who have a little leisure and all who having long purses are in need of a little intelligent amusement and nervous excitement take upon themselves the role of public leaders and going to sleep over their self-imposed task through the greater part of the year suddenly awake to a sense of their duty and responsibility at the fag end of a busy season. The result has been that nobody takes our public meetings and popular demonstrations seriously. They are wanting in the life and the verve which usually characterise all public demonstrations in the Western countries and leaders have to go complaining loudly and complaining bitterly of the apathy of those whom they are supposed to lead. After twenty years of such disheartening experience, after twenty years of futile attempts to organise a national party in India, it is certainly high time that those responsible for the continuance of the congress movement should, in solemn conclave, deliberate over the political needs of the coming generation and devise some method by which the movement started with such fond hopes and such high aspirations as the Congress originally was, does not come to an ignominious and inglorious end for want of enthusiastic workers and supporters. How this is to be done is certainly a very large topic to the consideration of which we have not here addressed ourselves. But we be-

lieve and we think there is strong justification for such a belief that unless we train our young men for a public life it is useless to find fault with their want of enthusiasm and want of public spirit.

In ancient Rome young men were systematically trained for a political and public life. No one, not even a born Cicero or Demosthenes can step out of the school room on to a public platform and deliver eloquent and stirring speeches before crowded audiences. It goes without saying that in these days when the entire public is to be taken into confidence for the advancement of the popular cause we should have amongst us at least a score of very efficient platform speakers. No amount of training will succeed in turning out Ciceros and Burkes. But even if we have genius to take care of itself we certainly ought to look to the proper training of mediocre ability. It has been the experience in political life all the world over that more has been accomplished by the power of the tongue than by the power of the sword. All the hard-won victories of peace have been mainly due to the persuasive eloquence of popular orators. Even during the short experience of active political life that we now possess we see that only men who have a ready tongue and a never ceasing flow of eloquent words have come to the fore-front in our political activity. Silence may be golden and may be a sure indication of the highest kind of genius and excellence. But such philosophic silence is not understood of the masses. Tyrants pay no need to philosophic silence nor are despots dissuaded from pursuing a ruinous course of administrative blundering by the doubtful agency of passive silence which is often liable to be constructed into ignorant indifference, if not into implied acquiescence. To those who are even the most slightly acquainted with the ancient and modern history of European countries, it

and silent qualities and adopt a more verbose and mellifluous style of public utterance than is usually our wont. Though during the last generation we have produced a few very capable public speakers, they have been more known for the learning and dignity of their public speeches than for the warmth and glow of their oratory which never attained a very high pitch and which could never warm upto a degree which was sufficient to set the Thames on fire. We have never produced an orator of the type of Keshub Chunder Sen or Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, or Lal Mohan Ghose. Under these circumstances it is of the utmost importance that some measures should be adopted which will give a direct encouragement to young men who may be desirous of winning their spurs as public speakers. It is not to be supposed that orators will be turned out like graduates in their hundreds. But there should be some institution the main object of which will be to train young men in the art of public declamation. Local congress leaders, many of whom are orators of a sort, will do well to organise such institutions and to preside over the weekly or monthly meetings before which young aspirants after public fame will be called upon to exercise their vocal powers. Many public institutions new and old are dying out for want of workers and propagandists. We make a suggestion to the founders of the Ranade Economic Institute that is to be, that a public school of rhetoric should be attached to that institution. The cost of maintaining such a school will not be very heavy. There should be annual tournaments of public debate and young men from far and near should be invited to enter the lists and to compete for the triumphal trophy which should be awarded to the most gifted budding Demosthenes of the year. If there be among the competitors no one who does not give promise of great oratorical powers to be develop-



ed in future the trophy should not be awarded but should be held back. Some beginning ought certainly to be made towards such an attempt and if we want to keep our public activities and popular institutions secure from extinction some attempt of the sort we have suggested will soon become a crying necessity.

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### Students and Politics

Principal Selby's letter to an old pupil of his, which is published in the *Indu-Prakash* of the 10th instant, is meant to be a contribution to the current controversy about the part which our students may take in public movements. Unfortunately Mr. Selby's opinions on this subject are too well-known to bear repetition. He thinks students have nothing whatever to do with politics in any sense of the term. We think this is too large an order. It is no doubt their primary business to learn lessons and be obedient to their elders. But we fail to see how this, even when well and dutifully done, can exclude or be necessarily inconsistent with such participation in politics as their intelligence and sentiment may prompt in them. It is a trite saying that it will be time enough for students to concern themselves with public movements when they are old enough to understand what those movements are about. But all knowledge is provisional; and the part which students actually take in any public movement must be judged by such knowledge as they have. Then, again, it is an erroneous supposition that all the students who take part in public movements are too young to understand anything about them. For many of them, though technically students, are really come of age; and if only an examination or two stand between them and public life that should

not entirely disqualify them from taking an intelligent interest in what is passing around them. Mr. Selby says that it is absurd to suppose that children who concern themselves in Swadeshism and prevent their countrymen from buying what they want in the market, do not understand the conditions of commercial prosperity for India. He evidently alludes to the supposed benefits of free trade to India. But this perhaps is an instance in which Mr. Selby, though he is old enough, does not, we must say, properly understand the conditions of commercial prosperity for India from the Indian point of view. Then, again, it is said that a boy who is allowed to indulge in Swadeshism is being trained to habits which must make him a bad son and a bad citizen. Now it is for his father to say whether such a boy really is a bad son. Also if we take tomorrow a plebiscite among citizens themselves, we are sure that a boy who is otherwise a good boy will not be declared to be in the making of a bad citizen simply because he may concern himself with Swadeshism. It is too much for Mr. Selby to presume that a blow is being struck at the root of our family life, because our boys are taking an intelligent interest in Swadeshism. We think an independent practical test of the truth about these things will be furnished by imagining for a moment what a Bengalee father may be thinking of his son when both of them may probably be engaged at this moment in a common effort to avert the partition which is regarded as ruinous to their motherland. Supposing the father himself to be an active and ardent agitator, would the son not be only strengthening his hands and gladdening his heart by his emulation, with the former in his work for Swadeshism? It is, therefore, altogether a gratuitous assumption that Principal Selby makes when he says that our public men are teaching their own sons to *disobey* themselves.

There is something in the argument that the word politics in this country means in nine cases out of ten an agitation against a particular measure of Government. We know this is unfortunately true. But if Principal Selby be willing to allow students in another country to participate in politics of another kind he must extend the same privilege to this country in view of the peculiar conditions thereof. Was it not Addison that said that children in England learnt or were taught to be proud of their Whigism or Toryism before they could tell their right from their left hand? And if in India politics by Party Government is not allowed but consists only of criticism of Government measures that may be regarded as harmful to the country how is the student world to be held to blame for taking part in the only and peculiar kind of politics which is made possible in the country? Principal Selby insinuates that *only* a Ranade or Telang might possess knowledge which is required for 'sane political criticism' and it perhaps follows that the rest have nothing but to hold their tongues. Precious indeed is this Principal's notion about qualifications absolutely necessary for political criticism. We should like to know whether Principal Selby holds the same view to be applicable to his own country in which case he must mean either that Ranades and Telangs, we mean men of their intellect, capacity and judgment were to be counted by thousands in England, or that it is men like Gladstone or Disraeli alone that could legitimately discuss English politics. We must say, with all due deference to Mr. Selby, that both these alternatives are incorrect. The fact that while hundreds of M. P.s and other politicians in England are inferior to Ranade and Telang in the qualifications which Mr. Selby thinks to be necessary for 'sane political criticism' Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli himself would never have subscribed to

the view that they alone should have the monopoly to discuss political affairs. But Mr. Selby's view is after all a pedagogic view of politics and its want of breadth is only aggravated by the insidious bias of mind which he possesses as being an Anglo-Indian, though no doubt an Anglo-Indian of a better sort

But what amused us most was the strange fallacy which this adept in logic has committed in quoting Mr. Ranade's example in support of his views. Mr. Ranade, we are told, 'worked before he began to talk.' But in the very sentence we have Mr. Selby's self-stultifying amplification when he says that Mr. Ranade 'never complained of Sir A. Grant who deprived him of his scholarship for declaiming in an under-graduate essay against the Government that educated him' Now the question here is not how Mr. Ranade accepted his teacher's chastisement but what it was that Mr. Ranade did that occasioned this chastisement. The most salient fact in the illustration, unfortunately chosen by Mr. Selby, is that Mr. Ranade himself, who is of course by common consent to be taken as a paragon of scholarly behaviour, 'declaimed in an undergraduate essay against the Government that educated him'. Now surely Mr. Ranade had not yet begun to work by the time when he indulged in a little free talk in writing in his undergraduate essay; and we fail to understand, therefore, how the illustration supports Mr. Selby's pedantic dictum. On the contrary the illustration only proves that boys will always be boys whether in their afterlife they become Ranades or whoever else. This is specially true of boys who have intelligence and sentiment enough in them to understand what is going on about them and to form their own conclusions thereupon. The effect of the illustration must, we think, on the whole be to support the view of those who claim that students as

*students* cannot be regarded as disqualified from concerning themselves with public movements. This pedagogic ideal of scholarly isolation from the contaminating influence of politics in any shape or form is hard to be realised in India at any rate, because, and for one thing, the advocates themselves of this isolation do not practise what they preach. For politics is inherently a controversial topic and the genius of controversy is calculated to have its sleep disturbed even by the insidious attempts that are made to inculcate artificial loyalty into the mind of the student as a political prophylactic against the disease of patriotism. There would be some meaning in what Mr. Selby says if the Educational Department and the Anglo-Indian teachers were likely to observe the strictest neutrality in political matters, as is more successfully done in the case of religion. The political activity of students is thus, for one thing, a reactionary consequence of the insinuation of supposed antidotes to patriotism and stimulants to irrational loyalty.

But even apart from this, Mr. Selby forgets that the atmosphere, in which the student breathes and has his being, must have its influence upon him. Mr. Selby surely does not expect *all* Indians to cease thinking and talking about politics, and how can that which a student incessantly hears and reads at home and abroad, excepting for the few hours of actual tuition, should fail to make him participate in the general wave of public feeling? Mr. Selby errs in thinking that because a student concerns himself in politics, he must necessarily be reared in habits of license or disloyalty. Now politics in India is yet neither the one nor the other. And if Mr. Selby, acting under this wrong impression, chooses to cease to be a friend and to become only a repressive taskmaster he will forfeit even that amount of respect and affection from his

students that falls to his lot at present. Unprovoked lawlessness and wanton disobedience to parents has never been or will never be preached by any publicist or politician in India, for he stands only to lose and not to gain thereby. But the claim that no student shall take any part whatsoever in politics of any sort, even if he has express or implied consent of his guardian thereto, is too large to be allowed unchallenged.

We may conclude by reminding *Principal Selby* that in England at any rate the pedagogic ideal of politics, which he proposes for India, was never liked or realised. The traditions of the student-world in England point to a different direction altogether. We may quote but one instance. *John Richard Green*, in his history of the English people, thus writes of the students of the Oxford University in the generation in which the Magna Charta was won by the people from their King—"Every phase of ecclesiastical controversy or political strife was preluded by some fierce outbreak in this turbulent, surging mob (of Oxford students). When England growled of the exactions of the Papacy the students besieged a legate in the abbot's house at Osney. A murderous town-and-gown row preceded the opening of the Baron's War. 'When Oxford draws knife,' ran the old rhyme, 'England's soon at strife'." And the historian without regretting that students should have taken a part in the public movements simply remarks—"But the turbulence and stir was a stir and turbulence of life!"

(15-10-03)

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## National Education

One cannot possibly hide from himself the fact that the question of "National Education" has come upon the public in India under somewhat unfavourable auspices. The Bengal Partition only accelerated its advance by a few years; for we may be sure that even in the absence of that political catastrophe and the sudden outburst of national consciousness throughout the length and breadth of the Indian continent, the question of national education was sure to present itself before us sooner or later as a purely educational problem. But thanks to the Bengal Partition and all the fruitless agitation over it, what was gained in an early development of the idea of national education was perhaps to a certain extent lost in the colour of politics in which it came enshrouded. The practical disadvantage of such a state of things has been realised in the unwillingness of many people to give the case for national education a patient or an impartial hearing. Thus one class of men simply fly at a tangent as soon as they hear the word 'national education' uttered, as if it was a horrid and abominable emanation from a politically disaffected and psychologically unsound mind. Another class, though not so impulsive as the first, can hardly conceal their feeling of distrust and even their sense of pity at the misguided men concerned in the hobby of national education, who, in the opinion of the former, are making themselves perhaps as ridiculous as the professors in the Academy of Lagado in Laputa, the land of Gulliver's adventures. These think that working for a thing like national education in the present condition of India is, to use the mildest phrase, as hopeless a business as "extracting sun-beams from cucumber or converting ice into gunpowder, or feeding spiders with curiously coloured flies to

secure many colouredness for their cobwebs." On the other hand, there are others who honestly believe that a scheme of national education is, after all, not 'a wonder of human folly,' and others still who, regarding the realisation of such a scheme as eminently practicable and urgently called for in the best interests of the nation, have already taken the work in their hands and resolved to devote their life to it. The question, therefore, arises—whereabout between these two extreme positions lies the truth about the much-vexed question of national education, and I propose in this small article to answer this question according to my own dim lights.

National education has not so far been defined, but only attempted to be described. Perhaps the most common description of it to-day is contained in these words "education on national lines and under national control." Apart from the difficulties as to practical details, one may easily understand this description if he has the inclination to understand it. But the description has not been universally accepted. In some quarters there is even an aggressive tendency to make trouble about accepting any description of national education. The general proposition that the simpler and the more familiar the term, the greater the difficulty of its description, holds good in the present case also. But one can hardly resist a smile when he finds that men who had never been weary of bandying the word 'national' or every possible derivative to the word 'nation,'—as if it was as light as a shuttlecock—sitting down hopeless as if they had to cross the Alps without a guide, as soon as they were called upon to understand the word only in its usual familiar sense, even when applied to education: 'National life,' 'national work,' 'spirit of Indian nationality,'—all this they can understand; the only thing they cannot for the life of them understand is.



'national education'; even in the case of some who understand the term 'national education' right enough, there are certain misunderstandings which require to be corrected. It is possible that some reckless advocates of national education may have given cause for these misunderstandings. But the injury to the cause of national education is all the same real. Thus there is a belief in certain quarters that the movement of national education is a purely political movement. So far as I may presume to interpret the movement, it is not so. National education is surely not meant to be in any way a more direct agency for working out political results than any education generally is. The interdependence of most kinds of public activity in any nation is a well-established sociological truth, and especially India in its present early stage of national development could not be an exception to that rule. This I think has been ably put by Dewan Bahadur Ambalal Sakarlal Desai, M. A., LL. B., ex-Chief Justice, Baroda, in an article in the February number of the "Hindustan Review." He says—"Physical regeneration, economic progress, social and political reformation, and a wide expansion of education are among the chief subjects that compete for the thought and energy of our educated men. At times the persistent demand of each almost tries to exclude the rest. This state of things would be bewildering to any honest inquirer. All these reforms rest on the same substratum of patriotic altruism, that the regeneration of our country is the common aim of all, and that they are all essentially interdependent, so that the promotion of any one or more promotes the rest." The object of all education is to make men cultured and to fit them for good and glorious life-careers, and the only true culture is perhaps that which enables men to perceive and realise the noblest and the best ideals. Those who

advocate national education believe that even so far as national politics is concerned, their scheme of education may facilitate this perception and realisation of the best ideals better and to a greater extent than the present system of education. Their ends may thus be not exclusive of politics; but the methods by which they intend and hope to achieve these ends are to be strictly educational. Then there are others who believe that national education means the bringing back into vogue the old orthodox religious dogmas which so largely entered the education of our boys some eighty years ago, and that there is to be a reconstruction of the temple of superstition and bigotry. Now national education must differ from the education which is being now given in this respect that "religious literature" may receive greater recognition than before; for if the roots of some of the best traditions and ideals of any race of men are found imbedded in the literature of sacred books of that race, then a more extensive study of those books must naturally form a part of the curriculum in a school of national education. But there is no warrant for the absurd supposition that national education, that is, now being talked of, means nothing more than a system of sectarian and denominational religious preaching. The most avowedly religious aspect of national education in India is the one which is presented in Pundit Madan Mohun Malaviya's scheme. But even there it will be found from the prospectus published two years ago, that the substantive part of the curriculum is essentially secular. That scheme is, I may say, a secular bill with a religious preamble. The preamble may be useful as showing the aims and objects of the author of the scheme; but the text, which alone has the operative or governing force, is free from religious bias and is perfectly secular. Anticipating perhaps the charge that his scheme may remain open to

in the absence of explanation, the Pandit has explained in the prospectus that his new University will be a Hindu University not in the sense that it will discard the study of Western literature and science, but only in the sense that it will restore to its place in the educational curriculum the study of religious and semi-religious literature, and give an altogether but fully deserved importance to the use of the vernaculars as media of instruction. The study of Sanskrit on a larger scale than at present was proposed not with a view to prejudice the claims of any subjects of secular studies but only as a means of "preserving and popularising for the benefit of Hindus and the world at large all that was good and great in the ancient civilisation of India, especially the high standard of morality and those teachings which led to the formation of the solid types of character which were content with plain living and high thinking and delighted in beneficence and generosity." It may also be noted that in his remarkable address, delivered at the inaugural ceremony of the Bengal National Council of Education, Sir Gurudas Bannerji dismissed the subject of religious education with the mention of the arrangements made therefor, viz. that an hour would be set apart for religious instruction, when students professing different creeds will go to their respective teachers for instruction, which "will not include any ritual observances." Such a provision can no more interfere with the character and value of the secular part of the education than the course of daily Bible reading enforced at the Bombay Wilson College, for example, which has been recognised as a Collège of secular education and is receiving grant-in-aid.

There are others who have run away with an impression that national education is to be merely the negation of the acceptance of State aid for education organised into a

system. In my opinion nothing could be a more preposterous idea than this one. The advocates of national education are surely not such mad fellows as to suppose that Government could be relieved at any time of the expenditure of about four crores of rupees a year which they incur at present on education, or that they ought to be so relieved, even supposing that they could. Who, if not the ryot, pays these four crores into the Government treasury and for whose education, if not for his, ought the sum to be spent? And the aim of the advocates of national education is to utilise this money as much as could be done for the new system of education. Their ambition is not to discard the use of Government funds but to produce better types of education and compel Government to accept them and spend money on their success. All that they contend, however is that we must not give up the work of casting new types of education simply because Government would withhold their grant in the experimental stage of national education, but must make self-sacrificing efforts till we succeed in securing the acceptance of the new types of education by Government or the control of education in our own hands under any possible scheme of administrative reform. The self-sacrifice in this matter will be merely a tentative affair. For, as I shall presently show, there is nothing in real national education which we may not hope to ultimately persuade or compel Government to accept as their own.

I may now proceed to sketch the outlines of national education as it is understood by its best and clearest exponents; and the contour will, I think, run along the following points which may be claimed as the distinguishing features of national education:—(1) Having a University that will be as much a teaching as an examining body. (2) Giving preponderance to scientific and technical edu-

cation over literary education which latter alone is the education now generally imparted in Government or aided Schools and Colleges. (3) Improving the present course of literary education so as to provide for special instruction being given in the classical and historical literature of this country and for the best oriental ideals of life and thought being incorporated with the best assimilable ideals of the West. (4) Making provision for religious instruction under certain conditions, so as to secure the benefit of spiritual culture without at the same time accentuating sectarian dogmas and beliefs. (5) Making education easy by imparting it through the medium of vernaculars as far as possible. (6) Reducing, within reasonable limits, the number of public examinations. (7) Providing for bifurcation of studies at a suitable stage and for specialisation of particular studies to a greater extent. (8) Providing for greater discipline to be enforced upon boys by making residence in special quarters compulsory, and making them conform to certain manners and methods of living which may be calculated to educate them in certain civic virtues. (9) Providing for superior training to be given to boys in physical manly sports, pastimes, and exercises, in order to teach them self-reliance and self-defence. (10) Generally giving such education to boys and girls as will make them useful, self-respecting, self-sacrificing units of the Indian nation, as much ambitious of a proud future as conscious of a proud past.

Education given on these lines will be education on what are called "national lines." And if that is secured then the question of control will hardly arise or will not receive that importance which is at present given to it. Control is only a means to an end, and the demand for control is not a wanton demand. For supposing the State itself enters so much into the spirit of the nation as to be

persuaded or impelled to carry out all these reforms, then it does not matter who wields the control. But there is evidently no immediate prospect of the State doing so, and till then the question of national education will be complicated with this objective feature of national education, *viz.* national control. It may be said that it would be unreasonable to expect Government to relinquish their control over education, and that for that reason the demand for national education is an impracticable demand. The reply to that is that in the first place we do not demand that Government should completely relinquish their control, but we do demand that education should form one of the subjects of administrative decentralisation, subject only to the veto of the supreme authority; and secondly I may say that this ideal of national control is not certainly more chimerical than the ideal of "Swaraj" preached by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, or that of self-government on the colonial model adumbrated by the Hon. Mr. Gokhale. In fact national control on education is only a part of Swarajya or (colonial) self-government, and it is surely more reasonable to hope for a part than for the whole. Such a view receives confirmation from the fact that the British Government was recently prepared to give by means of the Devolution Bill, complete national control over education, though the Bill did not give an inch of new legislative power, to the Irish people.

The question of education on national lines is a question essentially of the nature of educational reform. It almost resolves itself into a question of improved standards and methods, calculated to lead to results of national importance. I am aware that the word "national" creates vague fears and apprehensions in the minds of many people. But there is no arguing with those, either officials or non-officials, who smell in, or mean by, nationa-

lium nothing but "reeking steel or smoking gun-powder." There is hardly any civic right or privilege which if carried to extremes, might not be proved to be capable of alarming results. But short of that fire-eating interpretation, there is much in "national" education that we may legitimately ask for and Government may safely yield to us. I cannot here enter into a detailed defence of the ten distinguishing features of national education given above. But I am convinced that Government cannot reasonably take objection to any single item out of these. It may be true that they have not got enthusiasm enough to take the initiative and make experiments with the new educational programme. But the next best thing they may do is to cease to look with suspicion and give perfect liberty of action to aided institutions to do the needful, if inclined to do so. At present aided institutions are in a straight jacket as it were; they cannot move an inch on any side, and for that reason they are even less popular than frankly and avowedly Government institutions. It is a pity that the halcyon days of the Education Commission, presided over by Sir W. Hunter, are gone, and the co-operation and voluntary association of private educational institutions with Government "in the work and responsibility of national education," which was then recommended to be actively sought, is now regarded as an evil. But if Government will not be restored to their old level of generousness, then the duty of the people in the matter of national education is clear. The question has received the blessings of the National Congress, but what is perhaps a far more important element of success yet remains to be touched, *viz.* a discussion of details and the work of organization. I readily admit that the question presents numerous difficulties on the practical side. But they are by no means insurmountable, and it is to be hoped that the leaders of

the educated classes will make a serious effort to hold private conferences and discuss details. It is well-known that so far as Bombay is concerned it was privately arranged on the occasion of the last Provincial Conference at Surat to call a meeting of those interested in national education to discuss the question so that the points of agreement and difference between the different leaders of thought may be submitted to the next Provincial Conference to be held at Dhulia.

There are numerous points to be considered in a practical discussion of the question such as the following:— (1) The meaning which may be conventionally assigned to the term national education (2) The merits of the scheme framed by the Bengal National Council of Education. (3) The question how far existing aided institutions could or could not be used in making a 'bona fide' experiment in certain features of national education. (4) How far new and altogether independent institutions are an absolute necessity. (5) The question of funds and the chances of popularity or otherwise of such institutions. (6) The proportion of immediate attention to be paid to the scientific and technical part of education on the one hand, and to the literary part of national education on the other. (7) A practical scheme of religious instruction that may be accepted as really national without cavil or protest by the group of Hindus and the group of Mahomedans and so forth. But it is impossible to discuss all these details within the limits of a short article, and I can only hope that the private conference on the subject of national education will be soon held and will show good results.



But like the bloom of the flower the glamour of youth does not abide for ever. To many a young man the disillusionment comes soon. What by the sight of the real world, laid bare by the touch-stone of experience, and the realisation of limitations which beset every path, a steadying and sedative effect is soon produced on his mind, and the Nemesis, to use the word in the mildest sense, is helped by the burden of the heavy responsibilities of family life which he has to bear and carry through the swift currents of the main stream of life. Till then there is no knowing what turn they will take or how they will dispose of their lives.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the complaint about the young generation is confined to our own Province. Nearly the same tale is heard from every Province of India; and it would seem strange, though it is none the less true, that want of discipline is urged just at this moment even against the young generation in England. Thus in an article, contributed by the Right Honorable the Earl of Meath to the *Windsor Magazine* for the month of December on the subject of 'The Boy-Scout Movement,' we find the following observations:—  
 "Of late years the bonds of discipline have been disastrously weakened, in the home and in the school, to the detriment of the society and the State....The practical evils resulting from neglect of control may be seen in children who are permitted to be a law unto themselves, who are never called upon to subdue self and who are the cause of unhappiness to themselves, of constant worry to their parents and of annoyance to their neighbours. Had assiduity in the performance of duty, and instantaneous, unquestioning and cheerful obedience been insisted on in early years all this trouble would have been avoided." The Boy-Scout movement is intended to counteract

and prevent these evils ; its avowed object being to make of a lad a hardy, virile, truth-speaking, duty-loving Briton worthy to bear the heavy but honourable burdens attached to the citizenship of the British empire.

We honestly think that it requires more evidence than we have actually before us to sustain an indictment against our young generation as a whole. In the meanwhile, no one can have, however, the slightest objection to any measures that could be taken with any chance of success to remedy what may be even a passing distemper of even a fraction of that whole. The claims of instruction in Religion, Morality and Civics, moreover, are so patent that we have to consider them even apart from the truth or untruth of the description, which has become fashionably current, of the mental condition of our young generation. It may be alleged with perfect truth that our present curricula of education are highly imperfect because of the omission therefrom of even an elementary course of ethical and religious training. The education of the heart is the necessary complement of the education of the intellect ; and there is every thing to be said in favour of making Religion and Morality at least as much a subject of substantive study as History or Mathematics, because the former alone can adequately deal with the relations of man to God, the higher relations of man to man, and the entire subject of a future state of life. For it has been well observed that the School or College should be to the pupil not a mere intellectual drilling ground but a second home—a place in which his whole nature and especially what is best in him may expand and grow. The educational aim must be not merely to pave the pupil's way to future success, not merely to make his mind a perfect instrument of thought, or a kind of intellectual loom capable of turning out the most complicated

intellectual patterns,' but to build up manhood and to develop character. Now it may be true that in a School or College there are manifold opportunities for influencing the moral life. Thus it would not altogether be fanciful to say that the teaching of Science lends itself to the cultivation of truthfulness, because truthfulness is the correspondence between thought, word and action, and no subject requires such intellectual honesty and truthful accuracy as the study of Science. Then, again, history presents natural opportunities for inculcating upon the mind of young students the lessons of heroism, self-sacrifice, devotion to duty, patriotism, the strength and weakness of human character, and of the mission of the mankind, &c. So also Literature being the medium through which all that part of our inner life which defies scientific formulation finds expression, it gives a voice to that within us which would otherwise remain dumb and gives fixity to that which would otherwise be evanescent. Good literature is said to be a glass in which we see our best selves reflected. And in the same way some value has got to be attached also to every other subject of study. But even these subjects must prove barren of moral education if no purposed lessons are drawn and pointedly impressed on the mind of the younger generation. But not only the purposed, but, we are afraid, even the incidental opportunities arising from the study of secular subjects *for giving moral instruction at School and College* are at present neglected. What is, therefore obviously wanted is a change in our very attitude towards the system of school education, so that we shall not only make the most of incidental opportunities, but shall have a craving for direct and legitimate opportunities for a study of morality based on religion.

## The Elevation Of The Depressed Classes

It is certainly a sign of national awakening that the attention of the leaders of every section of the Hindu Community is being drawn towards the solution of the important problem of the depressed classes in the society. What with the change in the circumstances of the society and what with a decided upheaval in the humanitarian sentiment of the people an all-round enthusiasm has been created in the public mind about pulling down as far as possible the barriers between the higher and the lower strata of the social structure, and pulling up with the right hand of fellowship those who were apparently condemned to eternal degradation behind those barriers. When the tide begins to rise it raises the level of the water in every tributary, creek or channel which may be connected with it. And no one need wonder that with the upheaval of the national sentiment in India the idea of the raising of the status of the depressed classes is coming as much into evidence as that of *regaining the old measure of national wealth by the pursuit of Swadeshism or of winning the political Swarajya by agitation.* No one now says or even thinks that the old water-tight compartments of caste should be perpetuated in future, even on the ground that the caste system was a convenient method of securing division of labour in practice. The whole world is undergoing a revolution in ideas of economics, and it is certainly too late in the day even for India to hope or believe that the economic well-being of the future generations in India would be as well secured by strict conformity to the old order of things in social affairs.

• But it is important to bear in mind one aspect of the problem. And that aspect concerns the object which must animate the movement and must also be professed,

The object is, we think, the elevation of the depressed classes and not the subversion of the caste system; nor is that object the reform of the Hindu religion, we mean the forms of worship as they obtain at present. Now be it clearly understood that there is not, in our opinion, any thing to estop any one from raising any or both of the two other questions. It is open to any one to contest the position that mere birth should irrevocably determine the class or caste of a human being; it is similarly open to any one to raise the question whether idol-worship is the best kind of worship and whether any other form, if substituted, will not be more in accordance with the spirit of the best traditions of the Hindu community. But the point here is whether questions like these must be necessarily mixed up with the practical working of the problem of the elevation of the depressed classes. The answer must, we think, be in the negative. The foremost reason against this mixing up is that it would amount to sailing under false colours. The caste question and the worship question have of course an importance of their own. But that is no argument for smuggling them under the wing of the question of the elevation of the depressed classes. One can understand a crusade against caste. But one cannot possibly understand, much less appreciate, the suppression of caste as sought for through the results of an appeal to elevate the depressed classes. So also with the question of the reform of worship. The Bramho Samaj or Prarthana Samaj may have points in their favour when considered as theoretical ideals of religion. But while idol worship is rationally defensible, it would be absurd to expect that the large masses of the Hindu community can summarily reject the particular form of worship which has been theirs for generations together in the past and which, though in a more refined manner, remains

with those who can lay a claim to better enlightenment of mind. Refinement of the heart is a thing which has no invariable connection with learning. You can as often meet crude bigots in the ranks of the learned as hearts of a fine rational and moral grain among men whose literary equipment has not gone beyond the rudiments. Tukaram was not a Prarthana Samajist, he *was* an idol-worshipper, but who can question the proposition that his soul was more immersed in real liberalism of spirit than some of your leaders of the Prarthana Samaj who object to the worship of all idols except those of men in political power? It should be remembered that even men who have received the highest education and are admittedly as cultured as they are religious have not unanimously declared against idol-worship or joined the Prarthana Samaj or Bramho Samaj. The fullest freedom of the form of worship is a speciality of the Hindu religion and a speciality which marks out not its worst but one of its best aspects. And workers in the cause of the depressed classes will do well to remember that the mixing up of contestable with uncontestable questions is calculated to weaken the cause of both.

The only ground of basis which is absolutely free from doubt or dispute and even cavil, in respect of the problem of the depressed classes is, in our opinion, education. But while being so universally acceptable, it is fully as solid or broad as is required for the purpose. Education is such a pure and sacred thing and has such sovereign virtues in it, that in no country and in no age have we seen any voice raised against it from any quarter whatsoever. It is a privilege which the meanest could demand and aspire to and the highest can concede with grace and cheerfulness. The untouchables in India are not beyond the pale for the purposes of education, it is no sin to teach

the rudiments of knowledge to them. The fact of their being untouchable no doubt creates extra difficulties in the way of their education; but whoever succeeded in getting education inspite of these difficulties no longer remained untouchable in a liberal sense of the term. It cannot be said that our Acharyas and Dharma Gurus are at present against educating the untouchables, though you can hardly look for their co-operation if you raise the question direct of recognising them as of the same caste as the upper classes. The elevation of the depressed classes, as an educational movement, therefore, does not stand in danger of being opposed by any one whose opposition is worth counting. And the workers of the Bombay, Poona or any other mission for the elevation of the depressed classes will do well to remember that if they proceed on the principle of the isolation of phenomena and confirm and emphasise the educational character of their work, then their course will be perfectly smooth and their method efficient. There is no question here either of honesty or courage. There would be both honesty and courage if the movement were styled as a movement for breaking down the barriers of caste, in so many words. On the other hand, to seek to break down these barriers, while working ostensibly for educating the depressed classes would be sailing under false colours, as we have above observed, and such conduct would be both dishonest and far from courageous. Now we know that the result of educating the depressed classes must be in the long run to weaken if not utterly destroy caste. But that is a mere by-product; and it is one thing to expect that such an effect on the caste system may follow, while it is another to seek to bring about that effect from a movement not answering to that description. It is perfectly true that the caste division had originally to do more with

the quality of the habitual or traditional doings occupations and character than with birth, and the compartments of caste were never too tight to admit of elevation and degradation required by the merits of individuals. But centuries have confined the caste restriction to the accident of birth and a frontal attack on that distinction is not likely to yield speedy results. On the other hand the potentiality of education and all that it ordinarily means, as a solvent for the caste acerbities, is well-known and amply proved by experience, and this potentiality is expected to come out true in the case of the depressed classes also.

(7-11-03)

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## The Special Marriage Bill

### I

The Special Marriage Bill introduced by the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu in the Imperial Legislative Council is now before the public. And though it cannot be regarded as a very urgent measure, yet there can be no two opinions as to its importance. The Bill is a simple one. Bhupendra Babu seeks by this Bill to obtain liberty of action in the matter of marriage for those who, while observing Hindu customs of one sort or another, believe that there may be room for extension and growth in consonance with Hindu ideals, that such growth and expansion may be secured not by secession from the Hindu community but by reversion to what made it great in times gone by. The Bill is in form an amending Bill, intended to modify Act III of 1872 only to this extent, that whereas under the old Act parties celebrating marriage unions in accordance with its provisions had to declare that they



did not profess or had ceased to profess the Christian, the Jewish, the Hindu, the Mahomedan, the Parsi, the Buddhist, the Sikh or the Jain religion, such a declaration of negation of any of these faiths should not be required hereafter. All other provisions of the Act of 1872 are allowed to remain intact so that all the conditions of a valid marriage laid down by that Act will have full force as before. Thus no person, even under the new condition of things, can contract a valid marriage under the Act, if he has a husband or a wife living, or has not completed 18 years of age in the case of a male and 14 years in the case of a female. Also the condition, relating to the prohibited degree of consanguinity or affinity, continues to govern the legal character of marriages under the new Bill.

The only change sought to be effected, therefore, is one relating to the professed negation of the original religion to which either of the parties to the marriage belong. And supposing the Bill is allowed to pass, the Hindu community will hardly feel any change in its organic structure or the government of the relation between the different sects. The community is already split up into so many sections on the ground of such a variety of principles of non-conformity, that the addition to them of one more sect cannot matter much. Indeed the new section represented by Hindus, who claimed liberty of thought and action in the matter of rites and ceremonies appertaining to marriage, has been in existence for a long time: and surely the Act of 1872 would not have been passed if such an enabling piece of legislation was not really needed by a considerable number of Hindus, whose education, influence and social position could not be regarded as insignificant. The enactment points to the existence of such a non-conformist section even many

years before the time; nor can it be said that the Act has remained a dead letter since. The Brahmos as a church have failed. Their propaganda could not succeed in attracting a large following. But on the other hand it has got to be admitted that the Brahmos are a sort of power in Bengal, that is to say, the province whose privilege it is just at present to lead national thought in various departments. Indeed they have shown that depth of enthusiasm for liberty, which as a rule characterises thoughtful non-conformists all the world over. The attitude which the Hindu nation will take up towards such a section is clear. The strict orthodox Hindus may differ from the Brahmos and the like, so far as the interpretation goes of the Shastric texts or even as to the authority to be allowed to them in the government of our social and religious life.

But that by itself does not go very far. The most orthodox Hindus of to-day have, though unconsciously, made such long departures from the obvious tenets of the Shastras in certain important matters, that those at least who have the power of self-introspection, and the will to use it will hardly like to think themselves as the most faithful of the safest custodians of the characteristic tenets of Hinduism. Like the sand in the river-bed we are all drifting and drifting though very slowly. On the other hand there are sections like the Arya Samaj who have struck glaringly new paths and yet stoutly and successfully maintain that they are Hindus. Do not the Arya Samajists proclaim that the caste distinction, as we commonly understand it, is not valid according to what they regard a proper interpretation of the Shastras? And yet have we ever denied them the name of Hindus? Similarly we can point to many sections among the Hindus who do not concede the same uncontested authority to the Vedas, but who are supposed

to have remained unquestionably Hindus by adhering to certain other prominent characteristics of Hinduism. Hinduism in fact is such a tangled skein at present that it is nearly impossible to successfully unravel all the threads in it, tracing them all logically to common origin, or explaining their growth by any consistent theory of development or specialization. But Hinduism itself knows all this. And even when it does not know it, Hinduism is so tolerant of honest non-conformity, that within its four corners to-day you can find a score of sects peacefully living side by side and enjoying the communion of a common name and the belief of a common origin. The Brahmos are perhaps too logical from one point of view or too romantic from another, but their non-conformity was never mischievously destructive. And surely we have far greater reason to tolerate the Brahmos amongst us and allow them to share with us the patrimony of a common name than, for instance, the Shaktas who under the thin cover of orthodoxy have introduced into the life of the society practices which are monstrous and ethically untenable.

The name Hindu again is one which the Brahmos themselves never really disliked. It is true that when the Act of 1872 was passed, they seemed to put greater store by their liberty of action than by the formal appellation of the Hindu. But we must remember that an exclusive preference was forced upon them by the framers of the Act. The Brahmos only demanded liberty to depart from certain well-worn rites and customs in the matter of marriage. They never adverted to the necessity eventually forced upon them of abdicating their right to the name of the Hindu. In fact such abdication does not logically follow from the liberty claimed. But the time was certainly unpropitious for their purpose. The British Government had injured their knuckles in their rough dealings with

the Indian people in their religious matters before the Mutiny; and it was not worth their while to bring upon themselves the displeasure of the great mass of conservative Hindus merely for the sake of giving legal assistance to the fair play asked for by the Brahmos. The Bial mos also were somewhat indifferent as to the name. But that was evidently because their name was then not really in jeopardy. The self-consciousness of the Mahomedans was then hardly in evidence. The Christians were a negligible quantity. And no one had even dreamed of *Machiavellian circulars of Census Commissioners*. The Brahmos were no doubt conscious of the departure they were making, but not of the danger to their nationality. If a negation of faith was required of them by the Act of 1872, it appeared to them less as a blow aimed at their nationality than as a peace-offering to the orthodox people of all nationalities. It was distinctly a concession made to the legislature in order that the difficulties in the way of a reasonable legislation should be removed, and the *bonifides* of the helpful legislature should find scope for active beneficence. But every thing has changed since then, including the attitude of the Brahmos and the attitude of the Government towards the Hindu society. By the same stroke of destiny while the Brahmos were impelled within the pale of Hinduism by a sort of centripetal force the Government have been by a centrifugal force—as it were, driven to dislike Hindus and to take the Mahomedans or generally the non-Hindus in their favour. The Brahmos while now not caring less for their liberty of action, have been taught to care more for their nationality. Much water has also flowed since under the bridge of Hindu conservatism, and the Hindu community in general does not look upon the Brahmos in the same light as it did before. The very fact that the Brahmos have

shown an anxiety to remain within the fold of Hinduism has instinctively led the community to open its mental doors to the returning prodigal son and to kill the fat calf of exclusive sentiment which consisted only in the denial of the name Hindu to them. And when orthodoxy and heterodoxy have thus made it up between them and joined hands over unmeaning differences, the Government has no business to stand between and to seek to perpetuate the cleavage by refusing to modify the Act of 1872. They cannot in the first place allege that the new Bill would interfere with the religious customs of the non-Hindu nationalities. But even there Mr Basu has expressly offered to confine the Bill only to the Hindus for whom it is obviously meant. For this reason we regard the opposition offered to the Bill by some of the Mahomedan members of the Supreme Council as unnecessary and unreasonable. As for Hinduism itself there may be a difference of opinion on the point as indicated by Hon. Mr. Subbarao. But most of the objections of this kind would be intelligible only as applying to the original Act of 1872. Supposing that Act were now substantively before the public, there would have been some meaning in raising the whole issue. But as directed against Mr. Basu's Bill, it is all futile. The only logical or even intelligible course for these opponents would be not to content themselves with opposing the present Bill but to seek a total repeal of the original Act itself, *if it is really so obnoxious.* \*So long as the Act stands and is allowed to stand unchallenged, the opposition would only mean that the supreme purpose of orthodox Hinduism would be to deny the name of Hindu to persons taking advantage of Act III of 1872. But the spirit of the traditions of Hinduism does not point to such suicidally narrow and exclusive proclivities on the part of its adherents.

## II

Last time we adverted to the general considerations that obviously favoured the Special Marriage Bill, which requires the support of the Hindu community in order that it may be passed into law. While doing so, however, we were not unaware that the supporters of the Bill would have to meet certain objections of apparently grave import. The first and the foremost objection is that Mr. Basu's Bill would enable parties marrying under the Act of 1872 to be included in the Hindu community and would thus indirectly force or foist upon that community a radical change in the institution of marriage, from a sacrament to a civil contract. Another objection to the Bill is aimed at the provision which Act III of 1872 makes for divorce being recognised as claimable under certain conditions by either party to a registered marriage under the Indian Divorce Act. For, section 17 of the Civil Marriage Act lays down that the Indian Divorce Act shall apply to all marriages contracted under the former and that any such marriage may be declared null or dissolved under certain conditions and in the manner mentioned by the latter. On the strength of these two objections it is argued that Mr. Basu's Bill, if it is allowed to amend the Civil Marriage Act only as desired by him, would make matters for the Hindu society worse than they were in consequence of the exclusive provisions of the old Act. It might be contended that the orthodox Hindu community never approved of the principles of the Civil Marriage Act even when it was made innocuous by the provisions relating to the declaration of the negation of all faiths current in India, and that the enactment of this drastic provision alone induced the community to passively acquiesce in the Civil Marriage Act,

even as it is. That means that if left to themselves the Hindu community would have none of the Act, even together with its strict safeguarding provisions; they would throw the Act bag and baggage, every clause and every section, out of the statute book.

Now with this last contention we have no quarrel. We know that the Hindu community would have none of an enactment like a Civil Marriage Act in any shape or form whatever, and, as we have already said in our last article, we too would be among these wholesale objectors. For, we instinctively dislike all state interference in religious or socio-religious matters. We might be well aware that the Civil Marriage Act is only a permissive or enabling measure and yet we would maintain that no such legislation is justifiable, because it would after all be required to exercise its beneficent powers only in cases, in which it could never be said that the collective wisdom of the community was unequal to the task of providing the necessary measure of equitable relief. But we have again and again to point out that we are not dealing with the situation as it arose before 1872 when the Civil Marriage Act was yet to be enacted, but in 1911 when the Act is in full force, when it is regarded as nearly past all hopes of total repeal, and when while we have in the Civil Marriage Act, as it is, all the legislative facilities for a revolt against and all the aids to a successful seduction from the authority of Hinduism, we are only deprived of the means to give the Brahmos and others the *locus penitentiae* which they desire—the margin on which the account between orthodox Hinduism and the men of new ideas could be adjusted and a reconciliation made between them.

To those, however, who would object to Mr. Basu's Bill on the very ground that they think such reconcilia-

tion undesirable, we have a different reply to give. We think we can join issue with these and prove that the Civil Marriage Act, if allowed to be modified as Mr Basu desires will not be after all so bad as they imagine. Of course we for one would do without the whole Act altogether. But so long as there is no genuine movement for the repeal of the whole Act, we shall say that next to a total repeal, the Act together with Mr Basu's modification is just the thing which, while it provides for the necessary liberty of action in matters pertaining to marriage, saves the Hindu community from disastrous dismemberment. We are at one with those who think that Hindu marriage is a sacrament and that it would be undisputed degeneration if this ideal were to be lowered and marriage were to take the form of a civil contract. But apart from the fact that the Act is merely permissive we are of opinion that the Act is not altogether incompatible with the religious character of marriage. Sec. 19 of the Civil Marriage Act distinctly lays down that nothing contained in the Act shall affect the validity of any marriage not solemnised under its provisions and that the Act shall not be deemed directly or indirectly to affect the validity of any mode of contracting marriage. Apparently, therefore, the parties, who solemnised their marriage according to a definite Hindu religious marriage ceremony in the presence of two witnesses, could go to a Registrar, avow the marriage and demand a certificate in the form and for the purposes recognised by the Act. The Act does not say that such certificate shall be refused to parties who essentially go through a religious nuptial. The only thing that the Act requires is that the marriage under this Act shall be solemnised in the presence of the Registrar and of three witnesses signing the declaration made by each party to



the effect that I, A or B, take thee, B or A, to be my lawful wife or husband. Furthermore, Sec. 12 of the Act distinctly says that the marriage may be celebrated either at the office of the Registrar or at such other place within reasonable distance of the office of the Registrar as the parties desire. By the payment of additional fees the presence of the Registrar could be secured at home where the religious ceremony may be proceeding, and just as the Grihya Sutras could not be construed into objecting to the presence of the Registrar, so also the Registrar under the Act could not object to the presence of the officiating priest. The obviously sensible view of the matter is that the Act while not at all aiming to undermine the need or the authority of a religious ceremony for marriage, only seeks to give collateral supports or buttresses to the validity of the marriage in question by lending the covering authority of the state or the legislature for legalising incidental practices whose lawfulness happens to be somehow not beyond dispute. The Act is a sovereign solvent for all the odds and ends of stubborn and erratic customs which in course of time get the better of refinement, common sense or religious scholarship.

for Brahmins, or conversely that Mr Basu's Bill would operate harmfully simply because a few conceivable cases of Brahmins would take the advantage of the Act and practically lower the Brahmanical ideal. The usual dilemma even here obtains: those that are good Brahmins at heart already will not be induced to choose the lower ideal of a civil contractual marriage, simply because there is such an Act of the legislature to legalise it, on the other hand those that were not good Brahmins at heart, would not be deterred even by the absence of such an Act from putting their romance of sentiment to stage on the boards of actual life. While persons choosing to go in for a registered marriage in preference to a religious ceremonial nuptial, simply because of the presence of Act III of 1872, would be a small minority, those among these persons who would lightly play with the provisions of the Divorce Act, simply because such provisions exist, would be a smaller minority still, so much so that it may be safely neglected for our present purpose at any rate, so long as the present Act is not repealed. Why should we necessarily suppose, that the desire for a religious ceremony of marriage would grow less simply because of this Act? True social liberalism means faith in the wisdom of a community; and though certain social reformers have chafed under the anarchy of custom in the matter of rites and ceremonies appertaining to marriage, there is no valid reason for supposing that any respectable class of *bona-fide* social reformers were ever actuated by a spirit of gratuitous vandalism towards religious forms and sentiments. The Brahmos themselves, for example, have proved that eclecticism is not to be necessarily confounded with love for religious lawlessness. It is true that the Brahmos took exception to certain well-worn rites and forms of religious conduct in practical life,

there, of the most current, if not the best type, but in their company were social reformers who had made common cause with the former, only for the time being. Certainly their union at the meeting could not be described as a sacrament, as in their wedded life there have been in the past and there are sure to be in the future an overwhelming majority of days of instinctive divorce or voluntary separation. Impulse, if not necessity, has made strange bed-fellows in this particular case. It should be remembered, however, that as we ourselves advocate the claim of all manner of Hindus to the name of 'Hindu,' whatever their actual practices may be—provided only they care for that good name,—we do not deny the reformers, who manœvered the proceedings of the Javerbag meeting, their right to speak against a Bill which in their opinion affects the vital merits of Hinduism. All that we would say about these gentlemen is that they were like square pegs in round holes, that is to say, their points of contact with the orthodox Hindu society are so few and limited, that they have hardly any status to clamour for the rejection of those, that would act under Mr. Basu's Bill, from the Hindu pale. Even if it may not be difficult to ascertain precisely what Hinduism consists of, still it is very difficult to support the claim of some of the reformers who are against Mr. Basu's Bill to the name Hindu. The arbitrary and dictatorial manner is really amusing in which each advancing social reformer affects to draw the line of the golden mean, so that all those that lag behind it may be termed "shamefully conservative" and all those that put one step beyond it may be termed criminally radical or culpably revolutionary. The maxim of these people would seem to be "Before me the deluge, after me the deluge!" But the man with an historical sense who has dispassionately studied the development of both the

while the original Act III of 1872 was only for those who did not profess any of the existing current faiths in India, the present Bill was going to give a real Civil Marriage Act for all the Indian communities. This, however, is no new point and all the supporters of Mr. Basu's Bill were, we think, quite aware of it already. Mr. Basu's Bill would indeed in effect create a new permissive measure providing for civil marriage for men and women of all Indian communities. But the real point at issue is whether the existence of such a permissive measure really throws the interests of these communities into jeopardy; and therefore, whether, if the original Act must stand and cannot be repealed, Mr. Basu's amendment also is not necessary; and whether Hindus taking advantage of Act III of 1872 must be necessarily driven out of the Hindu pale, even when as a matter of fact they had not renounced Hindu faith and were not only willing but anxious to retain the denomination. Mr. Bhajekar says that Mr. Basu's Bill would make the original Act applicable to all Hindus. Yes, but in this sense only, that a few Hindus who otherwise were sure to have willingly or unwillingly renounced Hinduism, would not now be compelled to do so. Mr. Basu's Bill certainly does not take away such charms as might already exist in conversion and renunciation of faith for any one. But on the other hand it cannot be said that it will give impetus and encouragement to romantic marriages. Because, such things are governed by that kind of human psychology which does not depend or is not affected by positive legislation of any kind. If we assume that before Mr. Basu's Bill romantic attachments would have been formed in a given number of cases, the number is not likely to necessarily increase on account of Mr. Basu's amendment. People generally do what they like, law or no law. The enact-

ment of the Penal Code and its rigorous enforcement for the last fifty years has not certainly resulted in showing a gradually falling curve in the penal chart of the people of India. On the other hand, to how many cases of widow marriage can we point out as being necessarily traceable to the influence of the Widow Marriage Act of 1856 ? Also in how many cases of conversion from one religion to another can it be claimed that the deciding influence was that of the enabling Act XXI of 1850, by which the laws and usages inflicting forfeiture of rights of property for renouncing one's religion ceased to be enforced in the Indian law courts ? The fact of the matter is that in any aberration from the beaten track of religious practices or customs, the satisfaction of the conscience or the assertion of individual liberty of action is always the main motive; but it is on the other hand counteracted by social and public opinion which always is the main operative restraint. Laws can never effectively restrain human action; all that law can do effectively is to enable and help the realisation of opinion and conviction. But even this law cannot do unless the ground has been already prepared therefor by the spade-work of public opinion. And therefore we may take it, even in the present case, that Mr. Basu's Bill, while it will prevent injustice to a few individuals who would otherwise have been compelled to renounce the Hindu faith, cannot take the problem of mixed marriages in the field of operation even one inch beyond the furrow which may have been made by public opinion within the Hindu community itself. And the liberty, reserved under Mr. Basu's Bill, to the Hindu society to exercise its rights of excommunication ought together with the above assurance, to complete the guarantees that could be reasonably demanded by any adherent or wellwisher of Hinduism for safe-guarding its interest against mixed marriages.

The sacramental character of marriage has come in for a large share of the exaggerated emphasis which Mr. Bhajekar has laid in the course of his argument. Here again, two broad facts may first of all be noted. Mr. Biju's Bill does not, as a matter of fact, forbid sacramental and even registered marriage and religious rites and ceremonies of marriage are thoroughly compatible under it. Love may militate against caste, but it has no reason to militate against religious sense *if it is thoroughly*. We are not here talking of really irreligious men, but with regard only to persons who may really have a religious sense in them but whom the romance of love may carry beyond their own caste or race. Given absolute freedom from restraint on marriage on the ground of caste or race, is it really inconceivable that any men and women participating in mixed marriage, should cheerfully celebrate their union with the fullest religious gusto? Every Gretna Green couple could not certainly be accused of atheism! It may be that their weak point is love, but it will be both illogical and unfair to assume that one accomplished lapse is a conclusive proof of the possibilities of all others. In England it has been judicially declared that the ecclesiastical law of England did not, till the Council of Trent, require the presence of a clergyman to marriage. The formalities of marriage in that country are even now regulated by the Marriage Acts which allow marriages to be solemnised either with a religious ceremony or without it. But Mr. Bhajekar will we think, admit that even in England, though under the law marriage may be performed without a religious ceremony, yet by preference and as a rule marriages are performed *with* religious ceremonies, and not without them. And this must be evidently so because the inherent religious sense of mankind predominates. The sacramental character of marriage has in itself no fears or terrors for

any one ; and if any Hindus will make use of Mr. Basu's Bill, they will do so not certainly to shirk or avoid sacrament, but only to bring about conjugal unions whose lawful character had been in doubt owing to the conflict of usages or religious authorities or even, we shall say, by the fact of positive religious prohibition. But the history of protestantism throughout the world has been made by men who claimed to do what was right in their own conscience and who also claimed for the society that it had outgrown the swaddling clothes of current religious dogmas and practices. To oppose Mr. Basu's Bill on the ground that it will enable people to marry out of their race or caste is at least intelligible. But the charge that it will encourage the avoidance of religion in nuptial matters is altogether unfounded.

Mr. Bhajekar has made capital out of the fact that the *declaration of renunciation of the Hindu faith in the old Act III of 1872* was only in consonance with the tendencies of the Brahmos of the time who were prepared voluntarily to abjure the Hindu name, and, therefore, Mr. Bhajekar argues that the Act was quite good enough for them. But he forgets that the Act, such as it was, was enacted for an ascertained class of people ; and if the same class of people now no longer delight in the renunciation of the Hindu name and the Hindu faith, there is now an equal reason for giving them what they want. The declaration in the old Act, it is said, was created to conciliate several classes of people ; but much water has flowed under the bridge since the time and it is now no use denying the fact that the opinion of a large class of educated men supports the claim for the cancellation of the declaration. Mr. Bhajekar has gone the length of suggesting that the religious zeal of the present day Brahmos has abated, because, unlike the Brahmos of old,

which, *e. g.*, either the dowry decides the union, or the parties of an unequal age enter conjugal relations simply because the male is in a position to command it and the female is a young unbefriended minor, or other marriages which may be classed as distinctly unethical for some such subjective or objective flaw?

Speaking generally, in 95 cases out of a 100, there will be no fear of wholly undesirable marriages being formed and the parties thereto included in the Hindu community, even if Mr. Basu's amendment is passed. In the remaining cases the change would be for the better by the amendment. And in this way. Before the amendment the choice lay clearly between renouncing Hindu faith and remaining in the society in a state of concubinage. The former involved a permanent loss of caste and also permanent loss to society, supposing there was any merit in the parties from the broad national point of view. The latter course provided for evasion, but was a degrading unethical course which, as observed above, could be neither self-respectful to the parties nor profitable to the society. But under the new state of things the utmost that will take place is the creation of one sub-caste the more. But even that fear has not much meaning, for it would be almost impossible to make any valuation of the addition when already there are thousands of miscellaneous unrecognised subcastes even within the Shudra caste. It would be like the addition of a drop to the ocean. The fundamental mistake of the opponents lies in the supposition that the Bill practically affects the interests of the great Hindu Society. It may perhaps be contended with reason that you should not legislate for small numbers and go in for a Bill not affecting a substantial portion of the community. If this objection is sound, it should have been remembered when Act III of 1872 was passed. But now by



keeping the Act and rejecting the amendment you keep the poison and refuse the antidote. It is strange that Mr. Bhajekar has not one word to say against that Act. Mr. Bhajekar is opposed to civil marriages, but does not the Act provide for civil marriages at least for those people who are prepared to leave Hinduism for that sake? If the Brahmos are really so small in number, who are they that they should be allowed to enter into civil marriages, a thing which is repugnant to the sense of crores of Hindus? And their readiness to renounce the Hindu faith for having their hearts' desire, would only aggravate and not mitigate their offence! Why should Mr. Bhajekar be prepared to tolerate civil marriages, even for only four thousand people?

But probably Mr. Bhajekar, we suspect, secretly approves of the Act on the ground of conscience! But look at the strange inconsistency! On grounds of conscience he tolerates a false renunciation of faith but on grounds of conscience he is not prepared to tolerate civil marriage! Is it not amusing that people should claim an exclusive monopoly to standardise consciences by the uncertain pattern of their own? It is indeed difficult to define Hinduism, but broadly speaking it consists of (1) belief in the Vedas as revealed scriptures, (2) a system and hierarchy of castes based on birth, and (3) the obedience to the penal code of the Smritis and Shastras governing and entering into the minutest details of life. Now among the present day reformers it is possible to find every single tenet out of these violated systematically! Some reformers—and evidently among them Mr. Bhajekar—are not prepared to accept the Vedas as revealed in the real sense of the word. Some reformers—and perhaps Mr. Bhajekar among them—stoutly rebel against what they call the tyranny of the Shastric penal code and have no scruple to secede and to take shelter under the banner of public opinion. Some

reformers, and foremost among them Mr. Bhajekar, think that they may re-marry widows and must not lose the name Hindu, though we know widow-marriage is like moulten lead to the ears of the vast majority of Hindus. Some reformers—but this time Mr. Bhajekar is happily not among them—think that they can systematically go on eating flesh and drinking liquor and run about masquerading as good Hindus without taking any “*prayaschitta*,” simply because they can afford it by their elevated position. And lastly, there are reformers—and among them Mr. Bhajekar is the most aggressive—who claim that the caste system is *un-Hindu*, and that caste could be done away with, not by breaking the shackles of Hinduism, mind you, but through the ministering agency of Hinduism itself, and verily the achievement will be religiously the most meritorious since the days of Vasishta and Vamdev. Now, a registered marriage with or without religious rites does not do anything so objectionable as any of the above things, from the real religious point of view. And we, therefore, do not know why it should be so stoutly objected to. We fail to see why the sacramental character of Hindu marriage should be placed higher than the faith in the Vedas as revealed scriptures, higher than the observance of the caste system, higher than the obedience to the Hindu penal code. If people, guilty of all these things, can be good Hindus, why not the man, who being really a good Hindu at heart otherwise, may protest that marriage outside the race or marriage without religious ceremonies accompanying it, may be justifiable? The presence of this variety of offenders within the Hindu pale only proves the central fact that it is not Hinduism that make Hindus, but it is the Hindus who make Hinduism. Any other supposition would militate against and would be controverted by the historical view of development of Hinduism.

Lastly we shall notice a few of Mr Bhajekar's rhetorical samples. He says—we do not propose to quote his rhetoric literally—that by his Bill, Mr Basu is going to place "Kama" above "Dharma" which is to be flung into the Bay of Bengal. But what decides widow marriages, Dharma or Kama? Mr. Bhajekar objects to the Registrar's Office and sets up the Mandap as an essential to the eternal sacrament. Surely the Registrar's simple office would be more imposing and would inspire greater solemnity than the sumptuous mansion of a Kersandas or Madhavdas. In a civil marriage, the God, says Mr. Bhajekar, is Hymen. In a widow-marriage, we would say, Hymen is the God, and thus the convenient transposition of the two subjects before or after the verb, allowed by the English syntax, saves the situation. Mr. Bhajekar ridicules the declaration, "I take thee as my wife or husband," as being very light, and makes much of the Mantra used by the priests. Now even the Mantra put into the vernacular means nothing but 'I take thee as my wife or husband etc.' In widow marriages perhaps the Mantra is there, but hardly more than a plaything. Further, there is the fatal objection that the Shas'tras provide no Mantra for widow-marriages! One wonders how far those who participate in widow marriage themselves seriously take the slipshod mummerly of the improvised Bhat! Mr. Bhajekar seems to have only recently developed a love for the Bhats. We don't know on how many occasions in a year he honours them with an invitation to his house. Perhaps even if invited, they do not come; for, they know, Mr. Bhajekar to be bent upon the heroic task of breaking caste through religion. But in any case the fact is there that he cares more for the depressed classes missionaries than these Bhats! Mr Bhajekar taunts Mr. Basu with the civil marriage as being a *Homa*—Sacrifice—of only all

faith and common sense. Is not Mr. Bhajekar aware that number's of those who perform the real ceremonial Homa go through it with only a sense akin to that of contemptuous toleration ? They too sacrifice their faith and common sense, but only waste so much useful ghee and fuel in the bargain. Of course, we say this not of the many who feel sincere satisfaction and devout consciousness of piety by rites and ceremonies, but of the few who stick to them not because they love these things but are rather afraid of giving them up. If the choice is to be between reform and religion, says Mr. Bhajekar, let reform perish. To this proposition we too give our assent in general. But when he says religion, what does Mr. Bhajekar mean ? Is it Hinduism in particular and no other religion ? Is Mr. Bhajekar prepared to say that outside Hinduism there is no religiousness ? And even within Hinduism, is he not aware that every one except the social reformers themselves, thinks that in pushing on their reforms, they are treading with an iron heel upon the true spirit of Hindu religion ? If widow-marriage does not give the go-by to Hindu religion, we do not see how civil marriage does. If he wants, let Mr. Bhajekar take a plebiscite on the matter. Even among the educated people some will be found to oppose widow-marriage, and some also will be found to support civil marriage. It is easy to say, let reform perish : but in how many matters of social reform is Mr. Bhajekar ready to do this ? We know that it is the game of social reformers always to represent a sort of religious back-ground for their reforms, and sometimes even the back-ground of Hindu religion, in the delusion or under the pretext that the highest and the holiest Shastric authority could be found for the latest freak of social reform. But Mr. Bhajekar well knows that the hope of a universal harmonising of the innumerable

want this Bill very probably think that Sita was born in a wrong age and ought to have claimed divorce!" Well, perhaps there was a divorce in the case, was there not? But we are wrong perhaps, it was only a judicial separation inflicted upon Sita by Rama on the ground that the Lord of Lanka was the co-respondent! But divorce or no divorce, surely Mr Bhajekar would have no objection if Sitamai had only remarried a High Court Pleader of her time, if she had the bad fortune of losing Rama, her husband, at any stage of her life. All this silly nonsense, we know, must be like molten lava to any devout Hindu; but we make a present of these galling words back to Mr. Bhajekar on behalf of Mr Basu, because he has chosen to play with the fire of rhetoric recklessly involving the holiest of Hindu names and the sacredest of Hindu sentiments. Now at any rate Mr. Bhajekar will learn that rhetoric is a game at which two can play. Mr. Bhajekar exclaims at Mr. Basu and calls him a strange Hindu. But Mr. Basu, we think, can effectively retort and say the same of Mr. Bhajekar.

To conclude, we might add a sentence or two to make our own position clear. We may be wrong; but we think that the original sin was committed when Act III of 1872 was itself passed. On the ground of conscience, a few Brahmos may have demanded a Civil Marriage Bill, but it ought not to have been granted to them, even when they were prepared to renounce the Hindu faith. For that involved a loss both to the Hindu faith and the Hindu race. The majority of a community ought to have protection against loss as much as the minority, who by their free-thinking are bent upon inflicting it. But if the wishes of a minority must prevail on the ground of conscience, they must be allowed to prevail in a case like that of the present amendment as much as in the case of the original Act. The remedy avail-

able to the majority can be used in either case with equal effect. And the loss to the society is, if anything, the less by a few individuals resorting to civil marriage and remaining in the Hindu Society, of course excommunicated, than by their forced renunciation of the Hindu faith. There is nothing to choose, from the point of view of true religious sense, between (1) civil marriage and (2) an ordinary marriage with all the appearance of a sacrament and all the appurtenances of rites and ceremonies but without real and living faith in the religious character of the transaction. Promiscuous and mixed marriages are certainly open to objection on general grounds. But the advocates of mixed marriage ought to be allowed the same patient hearing and the same toleration in practical life as is shown to the advocates of some other glaring social reforms, provided always that the community also on its authority by ostracism and excommunication between which and a forced renunciation of faith, however, there is a world-wide difference. Apart from the new inter-racial consciousness which is dawning upon mankind, the historical view of the growth and development of the Hindu race with all its constituent castes and sub-castes, now accepted as Hindu beyond dispute, has its own lessons to convey to a student of history, and there is no reason why protestantism in this respect too may not be allowed to put forward its claim, if it is prepared to take the consequences of its courageous action. (13-3-11)

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## The Hon. Mr. Chandavarkar and Reform from Without

The *Times of India* never made a truer observation than when it said in its leading article of Monday last, that "the European stranger in the land forms for himself or accepts from others a conception of Hindu society which is often misleading, unreal and unjust." There is a ring of a genuine and, therefore, bewitching candour about that observation which does great credit to the *Times*. It evidently seemed, towards the opening of its article, to be in a mood to welcome enlightenment on the subject which the Hon. Mr. Chandavarkar has opened in his learned articles in its columns. It was in a very becoming mood of meekness and modesty, that the *Times* chose to put itself under the category of "a stranger" but a stranger, one may say, can hardly without a miracle be turned into a knowing acquaintance, by only three articles of even such an able writer as the Hon. Mr. Chandavarkar;—and articles again, which when they were not personal, were, to speak the truth about them, rather abstract and didactic dissertations than anything like a correct and complete account of the present condition or the past history of even the reform movement itself, not to speak of all the other cognate topics about the Hindu society in general. And in the interest of "a real and just conception of the Hindu society" it is well to let the light fall upon the points shrouded in the cultured mysticism of Mr. Chandavarkar's writing.

The present discussion has been started by Mr. Justice Ranade christening the School of Reform by the name of the late lamented Mr. Telang and at the same time propounding that Mr. Telang was an advocate of the doctrine



by giving them a chance to be married wives,—all these were attempted to be accomplished by one remarriage which, no wonder, turned out unhappy and only served to set the hands back upon the dial of reform. Late marriages of girls often suffered for an unhappy association in the same persons with abused education, and the cause of female education suffered by the too cosmopolitan spirit of housing high class as well as low class girls in one school, opening upon them the dazzling light of the amenities of the life of educated English womanhood which the possession of independence and riches alone could render enjoyable without the loss of purity of character, and even recklessly exposing them to Christian influence. The reform of crossing the *Kalpanti* would have made a greater progress if Europe-returned people had evinced greater regard for their Society and not mixed up the cause of that particular reform with the touchy question of absolute and immediate abolition of the caste system, under any circumstances. The early reformer, therefore, became as unsuccessful and ridiculous as the celebrated tumbler of antiquity spoken of by Washington Irving, who with the ambition of jumping over a mountain took a start of three miles, but ran all out of breath just when he reached the foot of the mountain, sat himself quietly down for a few moments to blow and then walked over it at his leisure. As for the second item in the creed of reform from without, viz. appeal to European friends in power, and coercion by them, it is a well-known fact that the attempt has failed whenever it was made. Whatever be the worth of Mr. Malabari in the eyes of Europeans, it is a fact that even many of the reformers themselves did not like the attitude taken up by him, when he began to denounce early marriage and enforced widowhood from the housetops in England. Self-

respectful people, be they Hindoos or Englishmen will never relish an unsympathetic stranger, peeping into the defects of his own society, howsoever valuable may be the gifts in his power. The world has never heard of a barter of these commodities—concessions to demands of social reform and political privileges. It would be simply foolish to suppose that if we begin tomorrow to marry our widows and educate our girls equally with our boys, the English rulers will come forth with the grant to us of representation in the Legislative Councils and in the Parliament. But even supposing our rulers to be so far oblivious of their own interest and anxious for the amelioration of our social condition, is it not very problematical that the Indian communities will at a moment's notice kick up the coil of orthodoxy and embrace with open arms full blown reform? The very thought of coercing a community to accept reform is absurd. It is undignified, even mean. Social reform is the exclusive work of education; all other methods must end in disruption of the society. As for reform by legislation, the reformers, I dare say, do not know what they are following about when they say that reform must be made by legislation. Which of the reformers, so bold in talk, we ask, are prepared to bind themselves under pains and penalties, say not to marry their daughters within a certain age, or to remarry their daughters and sisters or educate their girls up to a certain degree or dine at the hands of a man of the lowest class? The experiment of social reform by legislation was tried in no time and in no country. Those that suppose that any reform was secured and safeguarded by the Consent Act are woefully mistaken, for it is never an item in the creed of orthodoxy to have sexual intercourse with wives before the age of twelve. So much for social reform. As for religious reform again, the reformers had

mixed up the causes of social and religious reforms together. That was an initial mistake. The quest after truth is always a noble pursuit, and the religious reformers would have been far more tolerated by the public if they had busied themselves only with sifting the manifold philosophies, dogmas, practices and observances of the Hindu religion, and reviving the Bhakti-Marga of the Maratha saints or the Vedantism of the Upanishadas. But they began their work in utter contempt of the society, by isolating themselves from it and marking themselves out as an object of suspicion to the ignorant and scorn to the knowing. The result was that the Samajas undertook unnecessary responsibilities upon themselves and ultimately failed to justify themselves. Indeed Mr. Justice Ranade has tried to explain away the failure of the Samajas by saying, "When we become members of a body we are wedded to certain principles, we become 'marked' men; every lapse is laid hold of and we are judged—and rightly—by the standard we have accepted." Again says he, "Join a body which has made religious or social reform its creed and you have to answer for all you say and do." Now these remarks are true; but Mr. Ranade can by no means make a grievance of the state of things disclosed by them. Mr. Ranade may well know that many a real reformer may be found out of the roll of the Samaja who are perhaps too large-hearted to make reform a *creed*, who never could be called upon to give an account of themselves for the reason, because they had never given up their society and estranged from them public sympathy. Mr. Ranade at least ought to know that on those Samajists who asserted and practised an estrangement from their society in the name of a higher standard of conduct lay the whole burden of proving that the estrangement was necessary and justified. The Samajists went out as defiant rebels and

could not, therefore, expect the indulgence of friends. Humility combined with sympathy is perhaps the secret of success in reform. It requires greater strength of individual character and greater amount of energy to win over the Society through your own family to the cause of reform and take them all along with you on the onward path. Reform from without, therefore, is bound to be less successful and less gracious even if partly achieved than reform within.

(27-11-05)

### The Genesis of the Prarthana Samaj

Dr. Fairbairn's visit to India may or may not have done anything to further the cause of the Haskell foundation. It has, at any rate, done a decided service to the cause of the Hindu Society. For, it was on the occasion of the reception of that Christian Missionary in the Widow Remarriage Hall at Bombay that Dr. Bhandarkar gave out to the world the genesis of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj, which may fairly explain the phenomenon of the foundation of most of the Samajas that we have got in India. The men of the Prarthana Samaj have all along derived their inspiration from the Christian missionaries as openly claimed by the Hon. Mr. Chandavarkar in his third article on "Hindoo Reform." It was but natural, therefore, that in the presence of one of the most learned and sincere missionaries, the floodgates of Dr. Bhandarkar's heart should be forced open by his characteristic frankness and that an eloquent flow of unreserved confessions should unexpectedly inundate the guest and eventually the public with very valuable information as to the genesis of the Prarthana Samaj. This is what Dr. Bhandarkar said:—

"It was many long years since some educated Hindoos banded themselves into a secret association for the purpose of breaking through the bonds of religious prejudice and to initiate social reform. The body owed its existence to European science and to Western ideas and knowledge, which had been imparted to the members by their masters. The society met in secret conclave because they could not brave the rigours of caste and communal prejudice; and irrespective of caste distinctions and prohibitions the members began by sharing their meals at one and the same board. Not all of them, however, were actuated by moral ideas and high sentiments of reform. Some had joined it merely to eat the prohibited articles, notwithstanding the fact that their conduct might have been anything. The result was that such members eventually became afraid of the consequence of their temerity and of an exposure before their caste men, to prevent which the records of the Society were stolen. But besides these weak members there were earnest souls desirous of reform made on religious and social basis. They thought that they could not violate the prejudices without ceasing to be orthodox Hindoos. But being fortified by the ideas in unison with their desire which they found in the *Shastras* and the religious books, they satisfied themselves with the moral observation that they were justified in violating the prejudices that had long hindered the way to reform, because it would be a sure and certain basis of their moral conduct, which again could be properly attained by a very strong and earnest belief in an ethical God. That was the nucleus and formation of their religious society—the Prarthana Samaj, which meant an association for prayers. It has not made any great progress either in the number of members or in its earnestness and zeal, still it kept on going, and would continue to go on. It got

its religious thoughts and teachings from the Vedas and other books of ancient and unimpeachable authority. The members knew that in the present days of moral progress religion did not consist in belonging to certain tribes or denominations only; it must be a great approach to truth. The East failed not to acknowledge the obligation in which it stood to the West, because it had received a great deal of light from it on that principle. The sons of the West were inspired with great zeal and earnestness, and there was no reason why the East should not benefit from the West in that respect."

The speech must have proved very edifying to Dr. Fairbairn and we dare say he will carry a copy of it as a memento of his tour, a trophy of his proselyting expedition. For, is not the speech memorable from a Christian's point of view? Does it not clearly indicate that English education has so far fulfilled its purpose of breaking the idol of Hindu religion with the hammer of civilisation, and does it not also prove that the educated Hindoos are on the high road to the Kingdom of Christ? If Dr. Fairbairn be so dull of perception as to accept the men of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj, at least Dr. Bhandarkar and Mr. Chandavarkar, as a fair sample of the bulk of the educated men of this country, so far as their attitude towards religion is concerned, he will surely have to pay the penalty of disappointment. But that is another story. To return to Dr. Bhandarkar, we should be unwilling to believe that his speech as reported in the *Times of India* of the 30th instant does him justice. But whether faithful or not, the reported text remains uncontradicted and we have to base our remarks upon it. We think the speech was very indiscreet and men like Mr. Justice Ranade could hardly have liked it. But this is by no means the first occasion on which truth has been dis-

closed by the dullness and has triumphed through the confessions of its own watchmen. So long we had the admission of the Samajists that the Prarthana Samajas had so far achieved nothing, but now we have got some new admissions which must clearly shew that they can achieve nothing in the future. The Hon. Mr. Chandavarkar has admitted that the Samaj "cannot boast that it has effected much and that its members are but a few in number and weak, woefully weak, in action," and now Dr. Bhandarkar also has conceded the point that the Samaj "has not made any progress either in the number of members or in its earnestness and zeal." But what is more important is that Dr. Bhandarkar has made certain admissions from which it can safely be asserted that the Samaj movement ought to be doomed for ever. The facts disclosed by the admissions are not new to the public; but they can be used now with a peculiar force as being admitted by one of the founders of the Samaj movement. Shall we analyse the speech a little? The Prarthana Samaj was, in the first place, a 'secret association.' The founders had not evidently the courage of their convictions and so could not come forward with a bold avowal of their aims and methods. They, therefore, planned a secret conspiracy. This proves that the Samaj was not the result of mature thought and discussion, but the idea of an erratic brain, and that it could not claim or deserve any sort of public confidence. We are next told that to break through the bonds of religious prejudice and to initiate social reform were the two objects of the Samaj. The Samaj meant violence in its very inception. But it had never before tried the virtues of conciliation, and no wonder that it repelled the society and incurred their displeasure whether fully deserved or not. To combine, however, reform of religion and initiation of social reform

was a far more fatal mistake. Each single item out of the two must have had its own opposers; and the combination of the two reforms must have, naturally enough, had *increased* opposition to it instead of diminishing it. We have already shewn in an earlier issue that the promiscuous co-mingling of all kinds of reform was a fundamental mistake in the method of the early reformers which even to this day is not wholly corrected. The body of the Samaj, we are told, owed its existence to Western science and knowledge. It may very well have been so but while taking the inspiration from the western ideas, the Samajists need not have lost sight of their own traditions or individuality which they did and eventually gave the Samaj the appearance of the Christian church, rather than a Hindoo religious institution. The members of the Samaj began with dining at the same table irrespective of caste. That was perhaps a wrong beginning, for the Samaj stood the chance of being regarded as only a mess for libertines, where the tongue may aggrandise over the soul. And so it was, as Dr. Bhandarkar expressly says :—"Some had joined it merely to eat the prohibited articles, notwithstanding the fact that their conduct might have been anything." But the Samaj not only included libertines but thieves who committed the theft of the papers for fear that they might be exposed. The Prarthana Samaj meant an association for prayers, but was, in fact, as indicated above, only a rendezvous for unprincipled libertines and dishonest men. The leaders of the Samaj who were some of them pious and virtuous men, knew all this and tolerated it. No wonder, therefore, that they could not save it from failure and exposure. So much for the Samaj. As for Dr. Bhandarkar himself we think he was extremely ill-advised in speaking all these things to a stranger. Apart from the



fact that his utterances did not do full justice to the idea of the Prarthana Samaj movement it was hardly consistent with his self-respect as a Hindoo. But it is well known that the presence of a European, be he of whatever character or status, always so affects Dr Bhandarkar as to make him forget himself. Possibly the Doctor is a thorough cosmopolitan and goes to embrace the whole world as kin; but the world unfortunately often repudiates him and he cannot see it in the blinding ecstasy of his uncouth embrace. The missionaries are some of them good people, but as missionaries, i. e. proselytes of the Christian faith, they are clearly in antagonism with us and though we are bound to accord to these good people hearty reception as brethren in god, still we must take care how we speak before them. The missionaries come with a professed mission to advance the limits of Christendom over us and are, even the best of them, predisposed to misinterpret us. The mischief, therefore, of such an influential gentleman as Dr. Bhandarkar actually aiding in that misinterpretation by misinterpretations of his own, may easily be calculated. In the interest, therefore, of truth as well as the Hindoo religion and even of the Prarthana Samaj we must declare that frankness or rather bluntness is not the essence of truth, and that the utterances of Dr. Bhandarkar must be accepted with great reservation. We wish the other members of the Samaj had the courage to set the Doctor right then and there. In that case we should have been saved some privileged plain speaking from Dr. Fairbairn. Injudiciousness in its great men is a danger to any society and their exposure becomes all the more imperative because their very greatness acts as a long handle of mischief. Dr. Bhandarkar, however, did not remain content with betraying the Samaj. He even referred to Bramhins as forgers. We, therefore, take leave to

say that though he may be at liberty to dam his own Samaj as much as he liked, the learned Doctor was certainly not privileged to speak of Brahmins as a class in the way he did. Dr. Fairbairn might perhaps be knowing even more than Dr. Bhandarkar seems to do in his dotage, that the English people would not yield the palm to the Brahmins in the art of committing forgeries and, therefore, may take the latter's remarks as indicating an aberration of his mind rather than as reflecting the true character of the Brahmins. (11-12-1898)

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### The Adjective Law of the Smritis

"There is no reading more jejune and unprofitable to a philosophical mind than that of our ancient law books." That is the observation by a great thinker and writer, Mr. Hallam, upon the ancient law books of the English people. One would be ordinarily inclined to make a similar remark about the ancient Hindu law books. For while most of the substantive law, Civil or Criminal, contained therein, has now been repealed by express laws enacted by the Legislature of the British political constitution in India, the adjective or what is known as the law of procedure has been so totally repealed that not even a single vestige of the old Hindu procedure can now be found to be in existence excepting perhaps the mode of administering a special oath. What we mean is that there is nothing peculiar to the old Hindu law of procedure that remains in the Indian Statute Book of to-day. This leaves nothing but a purely academic interest in the study of ancient Hindu law books for a modern reader. But after all legal procedure is only a means to an end, and it could not be uninteresting to compare the results

of the administration of justice in the present day of elaborate procedure codes with the same in archaic times, when procedure like other departments of law was charmingly simple. It is from this point of view that we found Mr. Gharpure's paper on the adjective law of the Smritis very interesting reading. In a brief compass Mr. Gharpure has passed under review the whole law of procedure as contained in the ancient Hindu law books. His statement, which is in the nature of a digest, is silently suggestive of a comparison between the modern and ancient law of procedure; and though the writer himself does not take it on him to express an opinion anywhere on their comparative merits, still one easily gets an impression, when he has finished reading the paper, that even with the simple procedure as laid down by the Rishis, a litigant might have as good chances of getting substantial justice as with any the most new fashioned procedure that may be in force in any civilized country of the present day. At the outset Mr. Gharpure has dealt with the question as to the true character of Hindu jurisprudence. Objection is sometimes taken to the use of the word law in connection with the commandments contained in the Smritis as those commands were not originally issued by a political sovereign. Mr. Gharpure meets the objection by saying that the law of the Smritis stands on the same footing as the English Equity and the Roman Prætorian legislation and that the commands of the Smritis having been accepted and made their own by subsequent ratification and confirmation by political sovereigns in the practical administration of justice they may be described as law even according to the modern theory of legislation. But after all what is in a name? The commands of the Smritis whether described as law or by any other term, were practically regarded with even greater respect and bind-

ing force than many of your modern laws, howsoever formally promulgated.

To turn to Mr. Gharpure's summary of the Hindu law of procedure we find remarkable good sense displayed by the Smriti writers in interpreting or laying down that law. Thus for instance, we find that they recognised no competitive examinations but made an essential condition that a judge must not only be well versed in the Vedas but must ever be devoted to that study, must be truthful and well-known for impartiality and aloof from all worldly environments which are likely to separate him from the highest truth. The best judge in their opinion was a learned mendicant. Further the Smriti writers contemplated a council of judges rather than single judges to preside over law courts. This ancient wisdom receives support in the present day arrangement of forming benches of judges in the highest courts of justice. Further the judges contemplated by the Smritis were not only judges of law but also judges of fact; and consequently they had the functions of judge and jury combined in them. In case of a difference of opinion among judges the decision of the majority was to prevail. But when there was an equal division the judgment of the most virtuous and superior among them was binding. It is a question how this superiority in virtue and learning would be decided in any particular case. Presumably this would be decided by public repute and public opinion so that the ultimate decision in any case may be safely taken to be thoroughly conforming to public opinion, than which even in these days of civilisation we know of no sounder practical test of substantial justice. The framing of suits and written statements, the framing of issues, the pleadings and the rules of the law of evidence as found in the Smritis have, again, a solid foundation of common sense though they want in elabo-

rateness which often proves more an encumbrance than a help. In one respect at any rate the ancient law-givers are seen to have been in advance. It is well-known that though plaintiffs and defendants have to make their statements *on solemn affirmation*, yet hardly any civil case of the present day will be found in which untrue statements have not been made on either side. Now the Penal Code does make it an offence to make a false statement on oath; but there are altogether *different agencies and different courts* for dealing with the offence. Under the old law the court itself was competent not only to dismiss plaintiffs' suits, but also to punish them by the same judgment, if their assertions were found to be unfounded or false. The old law was so far developed as to provide for the rights and liabilities of sureties, to prescribe minute disqualifications for witnesses, to distinguish between primary and secondary evidence of documents, to appreciate the subtle operation of adverse possession, to lay down elaborate rules for appreciation of evidence, to provide for revision and re-trial and so on. The law of the Smritis also takes cognisance of ordeals and other ways of an appeal to divine judgment for practical adjudication upon contested issues. The only thing one may say about this feature of the procedure law is that it is characteristic of every system of jurisprudence belonging to the ancient times and even the middle ages. The dissociation of jurisprudence from all reference to divine intervention is a thing of comparatively recent growth; and though the modern people have a right to please themselves by establishing jurisprudence on a purely secular basis, yet we cannot say that the old method of appealing to divine intervention in the practical administration of justice could not have served its own purpose as well, when we remember the principle that any system of legal procedure may yield

equally satisfactory results if it is not clearly unsuited to human nature or to the conditions of the society at the particular time. No system of adjective legislation can have any merits independently of the consideration as to how far it facilitates the administration of substantial justice on the facts.

(7-5-1905)

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### The Vedic Ritual Question

Last week Kolhapur was unfortunately the scene of a great row over a little matter. It is well known that the Mahratta gentry of Kolhapur, it would be more exact to say a *class* of this gentry, have felt inclined of late to have their religious ceremonies performed according to what may be called the Vedic as distinguished from Pauranic ritual. Such an inclination undoubtedly indicates a desire for elevation in the scale of caste; and whether such an elevation may or may not be possible by means of artificial methods and in spite of the status conferred upon one by birth, we may congratulate the Mahratta gentry of Kolhapur upon their very laudable ambition. The claim of the Mahrattas to be allowed the same privileges as Kshatriyas, good and true, in the matter of Vedic ritual is itself an admission of the lawfulness of the existence of some kind of caste hierarchy in which the Brahmins have the lead. So also their anxiety to benefit by the religious merit of Vedic ritual can only mean that they confess allegiance to the Vedas as the final authority in matters religious, and would be amenable to the verdict of the Shastras even in the matter of the present controversy. The ground is thus clear and common, for the purpose of an intellectual controversy if the parties be willing to get

authoritative and final decisions upon stated issues and then to abide by them. The only issues in that case would be whether the entire Mahratta community or any particular class of them are Kshatriyas and whether and how far are Kshatriyas entitled to participation in the Vedic ritual. But we may go one step further. Even supposing that the Mahrattas are not inclined to go to arbitration in the matter but would straightway proceed to enforce what they think to be their rights in practice, that too is no reason why Brahmins should either scoff or take offence at the self-complacence of the former. So long as the claim is made in the *bona fide* belief by the Mahrattas in their title to the Vedic ritual and not merely to offend the religious susceptibility of or sneer at the Brahmins, the former ought to be let alone to do what they like. The majesty of the Vedas is too high to be affected and their sanctity too great to be profaned by the irreverent conduct of Mahrattas, or in fact of any one. The fact, therefore, that the Kolhapur Mahrattas have been inclined to Vedic ritual can, by itself, not be allowed to be a sufficient cause for the agitation which last week was seen among the Brahmin community of that place.

But on inquiry we learn that the attitude of the Mahrattas was unnecessarily aggressive, and the worst of it is that the attitude of the Maharaja himself has unfortunately not been so impartial as one might wish. The talk is only too prevalent that the Maharaja and his brother, the Chief of Kagal, are bent upon coercing their Brahmin subjects into an admission as to the Mahrattas being Kshatriyas and so entitled to Vedic ritual. The official high priest has been called upon to revive (?) this ritual in performing all future religious ceremonies on account of the royal family. And people fear that a violent attempt might also be made by some among the more

bold and enthusiastic Mahratta officials at Kolhapur to enter the temple of Shri Ambabai to worship the idol in person and thus perpetrate what may be regarded by the Brahmins as a wilful pollution. A certain Brahmin, who had lent himself, against the sense of the entire Brahmin community of Kolhapur, to a few impulsive Mahrattas to help them in carrying out the new fad, has been naturally excommunicated, and an attempt was made with apparent deliberateness to encourage him to thrust himself in situations where his presence would be regarded as a pollution of the place as well as of the religious function in progress. On Sunday last this Brahmin entered the inner temple of the City Goddess and touched the sacred idol. This was *con fi detat* which effectively brought the matter to a crisis as was no doubt ingeniously calculated beforehand. The whole Brahmin community was thrown into agitation. A select few proceeded to seek redress at the hands of the Maharaja; but being disappointed, and, if the report is true, somewhat ill-treated, they next went to the Political Agent who, being naturally perfectly indifferent to the whole affair, asked the Brahmins to present a written application. In the meanwhile elaborate ceremonies had to be performed to remove the dead-lock caused in Ambabai's temple by the pollution, and the feelings of the Brahmins and the Mahrattas unfortunately continue to be strained for the present.

In writing the above we are conscious of having been scrupulously exact in stating the facts according to our information. And they undoubtedly disclose a very regrettable state of things. It can no longer be ignored that some of our Mahratta Chiefs have of late evinced an anxious solicitude to be Brahmins every inch of them. If that were practically possible nothing would be more desirable. The present state of the country, if nothing else,



*imperatively demands* that the distinction of caste between the Mahrattas and the Brahmins should be as completely obliterated as possible, so far at least as the inviolousness and the false pride or unnecessary humiliation relating thereto is concerned. But can that be done effectively by such crude and bungling methods as seem to be recommended to the Maharaja of Kolhapur? It is well known that the Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwar of Baroda is also similarly inclined as His Highness the Maharaja of Kolhapur. But there in Baroda, though the controversy exists, still offence is avoided, and things are managed with a kind of adroit statesmanship. We may at once admit the claim of the Maharaja of Kolhapur to hold any views he likes in the matter, though many observations suggest themselves to one in this connection. Thus it may be argued with fairness that the great Shivaji, if any one, could command much more material of evidence to prove whether the Mahrattas are or are not Kshatriyas entitled to the Vedic ritual. Personally he was infinitely more popular and respected than any of the present chiefs. And the public mind could hardly have been expected to keep its balance if the question of their dear Maharaja, the admitted founder of the Hindu Raj, and the pet disciple of Shri Ramadas, being entitled to the Vedic ritual or not had been pressed home to it for decision in that moment of supreme national rejoicing—the moment, we mean, of the coronation of Shivaji on the Raygad throne. But it is to be remarked that in deciding the question on its merits while the Brahmin slaves of Maharaja's affection could detach their mind into a judicial aloofness, the great Maharaja himself accepted the pronouncement with most excellent grace and remained the same reverent disciple of his Brahmin gurus and preceptors that he was all along in his life. It will be thus

seen that both as a *res judicata*, and as a noble example of their illustrious ancestor's public policy the decision to which the great Shivaji submitted might be accepted as binding by his descendants. But even allowing the Maharaja of Kolhapur the right, if he claims it, of reopening the whole question now, there cannot be two opinions on the fact that he would be well advised to proceed in the matter with greater caution and discretion than at present. Unlimited as would be his personal liberty to indulge in any kind of ritual, there would certainly be a limit to his countenancing mischievous men to embarrass and hurt the feelings of the entire Brahmin community. There must also be a limit to his attempts to coerce them into the acceptance of any opinion by threats of displeasure. The questions between the Brahmin community and members excommunicated therefrom must be left to be solved by them alone. The Ambabai Temple and its estates are public property, and the Maharaja ought not only to leave them intact but must also respect the immemorial customs about its custody and appropriation. But even apart from all this, the responsibility of wisely arbitrating between the Mahrattas and the Brahmins in his capital devolves on him when they seriously disagree. We know the Maharaja himself hates, as much as we do, that any one of his subjects should make a petition, against him, to the Political Agent. The irony of fate would be completely painful, however, if a complaint has to be made against the religious intolerance of a Native Chief to the representative of a foreign Government which has almost scrupulously practised religious neutrality. Fortunately the Maharaja has no lack of wise counsellors, both Brahmin and Mahratta; and we trust the present unseemly situation at Kolhapur will be remedied ere long.

(Mar. 1901.)

## Mr. Justice Ranade's Inaugural Address

The inaugural address which was written by Mr. Justice Ranade for the Lahore Social Conference was an unusually short one. It was nevertheless full, as usual, of interesting points marked by that keen sense of local propriety which Mr. Ranade is well-known to possess in an eminent degree. The Punjab is supposed to be the land of the Rishis, and though the latter day research may not quite bear out Mr. Ranade's statement that the Aryan settlers in the Punjab were themselves the composers of the Vedic hymns and the performers of the great sacrifices, still the Punjab may be called the land of the *Rishis* as being their earliest residence in the Aryan occupation of this country. The inquiry, therefore, is a natural one as to what sort of men these *Rishis* were, and what the condition of the society was in their time. Mr. Ranade apparently thinks that the distinction between Brahmins and Kshatriyas was not known or at least not well established at the time. The instances, however, which he cites and has very carefully selected, strike one more as exceptions rather than the observances of a particular rule. And if the instances are exceptions they cannot be a fair index of the condition, the *normal condition*, that is, of the society in the time of the *Rishis*. A word in this place as to the practice of citing such instances. Nothing can be more natural than the fascination one is likely to feel for diving into the old Sanskrit classics and fishing out authorities in support of the position one is determined to take in social polemics; and a clear case, if it could be cited as a decisive authority, will go a long way in strengthening any argument. But there is a danger of carrying the method too far, for it lends to misappreciation of the inner meaning of things as seen in the sacred texts. And we

cannot say that we do not find traces of such misappreciation in the particular instances cited by Mr. Ranade in the case of the present address. Thus it is one thing to advocate that it is *desirable* in the present condition of the society that intermarriages between different castes or sub-castes should take place, and it is quite another to suggest from certain instances of intermarriages that the distinction between Brahmins and Kshatriyas was not well established in the time of the *Rishis*. But Mr. Ranade is almost inconsistent with himself in this matter. For, of what significance on earth are the instances if the *distinction* was not well established? Take the instance of the daughter of king Sharyati who was married to Chyavan *Rishi*. Now what are the circumstances in the case? One day while Sharyati was hunting in the woods, his daughter came across an ant-hill from within which two eyes were sparkling. She took a thorn and pricked the eyes with it and went her way. The blind Chyavan (for it was on his body that the ant-hill had grown), coming to know who played the mischief, stopped the urine of the whole army of the royal hunter by the force of his penance. It was of course an intolerable position: but Chyavan could not be prevailed upon to undo the mischief on any condition but the one of having the saucy girl herself in marriage. This was, therefore, a marriage under coercion, not a free will contract, much less an approved sacrament. The other instance, cited by Mr. Ranade, viz. that of Devayani is, if any thing, more conclusive still on the point. Now what is the whole story of Devayani? Young and beautiful Kacha, the enterprising son of the preceptor of the Gods, was studying the art of resurrecting life (Sanjivani) with her father Shukracharya. The Demons, being jealous of him, killed him and made Shukracharya drink the tincture made from his body. Devayani

"Of course the teachings and the methods and the subjects taught in these days must be made to suit our new exigencies and environments but the spirit animating the teaching must be the same as that which led the first settlers to cross the Vindhya Range and establish their colonies in the south. By reviving our ancient traditions in this matter we may hope in the near future to instill into the minds of our young generations lessons of devotion to learning, diversity of studies and personal loyalty to the teacher without which no system of school or college education can ever bear any fruit. We must at the same time be careful that this class of teachers does not form a new order of monks. I think our best examples in this respect are furnished by Agastya with his wife Anasuya and Vashistha with his wife Arundhati among the ancient Rishis and in our own times by men like Dr. Bhandarkar of our side, Divan Bahadur Raghunathrao in Madras, the late Keshaw Chander Sen and Babu Pratap Chandra Mozumdar and Pandit Bisvanath Shastri in Bengal and Lala Hans Raj and Lala Munshi Ram in your own Province."

The *Grihasthashram* is no doubt the most important of all Ashramas; it is the main-stay of all others. But what Mr. Ranade ought to have perhaps pointed out is that it is not the one Ashram to which man was allowed to stick throughout his life. Even *Grihasthashram* must be given up in favour of the *Vanaprasthashram* and *Sanyasa* in due time. And if we accept Mr. Ranade's view without this important modification then we should be ignoring the dignity of *Vanaprasthashram* and *Sanyasa* and their importance in social economy; and it would be easy to interpret his advice as the justification of a life-long career of enjoyment and no renunciation. In his anxiety to make an immediate practical application of his ideal to the

things and men around him, at any rate, has Mr. Ranade created a remarkable case of bathos. From Vashistha to—what a fall ! Are we really to have for our ideals men who have spent their life in service or who even in their old age are engrossed by the supreme thought of seeing all their sons best advanced in lucrative Government employment, or who have known no renunciation and made no self-sacrifices in their life, or who have worshipped mammon like their God and made their God a means of recreation at convenient hours ! We do not certainly want ascetics who do not care for the world; but we do want ascetics who care for the world but not for themselves.

(Jan. 1901)

### Mr. Justice Ranade and the Peshwai Diaries

That last lecture of the *Series*, organised by the local Friend's Liberal Association, was delivered by Mr. Justice Ranade on Saturday the 9th instant. It dealt with the contents of the Peshwai Diaries which, to the extent of 22 thousand folio pages, are yet preserved intact in the Alienation Office Records at Poona. These Diaries cover a period of about 110 years (1708–1816) which were perhaps the most eventful years in the whole history of the Marathas, and are written with official regularity by responsible officers of the Maratha Government. It goes without saying that the value and importance of such a record can hardly be over-estimated, and writers of the Mahratta history must be congratulated upon the fact that arrangements have been made for the publication of these Diaries. Mr. Justice Ranade has been devoting his spare moments for the last two or three years to a perusal of

these Diaries, and on Saturday before last he gave what may be called an advance reading of a portion of the essay which is to be read in extenso before the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay, and which will ultimately form a chapter in his History of the Mahrattas which is yet to be completed. As is usual with him, Mr. Justice Ranade has taken a comprehensive view of the subject and with the authority of the Diaries, has tried to shew that the Peshwa's administration had developed a remarkable many-sidedness of activity. In fact Mr. Ranade assured the meeting that excepting the Railway and Telegraph, which were yet to be invented, the State under the Peshwas had developed almost all the departments of activity which characterise the British Administration at the beginning of the 20th century. And the question which has struck the learned lecturer as most difficult of solution is—how should the Peshwai Government, which was so powerful and so elaborate, have succumbed so soon, and how the wisdom, the ability, the statecraft, and the political power which was living within the gates of this very city of Poona, hardly a hundred years ago, should have all disappeared and gone. While describing the system of the Peshwas' Government, in broad detail, Mr. Justice Ranade attempted incidentally to explain how the downfall of the Mahratta Power was brought about. The administration was divided among eight responsible ministers of State. Till the time of Shahu Maharaja merit alone all along guided the selection of men to become ministers, and their offices were not hereditary. In Shahu's time the Peshwa, though one among the eight ministers of State, was the executive officer of the Ministerial Council; and it was only after the death of Shahu that the power of the Satara Maharajas faded completely and most of the Ministers were cast into the background by the able and val-

rous Peshwas. The example of the Peshwa was contagious, and there being no central force to hold the system together, power was divided and every pillar of the State began to live and fight on his own account. The next cause of the downfall of the Mahratta power was, according to the learned lecturer, caste ascendancy. After the battle of Panipat the Brahmins developed military capacity and many Brahmin Sirdars rose to power. This led to the ascendancy of the Brahmin caste, which evil was further aggravated, according to the lecturer, by the disagreement between the Deshastha and the Konkanastha Brahmins. The worst phase of the evil was developed by the time of Bajirao II when Brahmins became the objects of lavish charity and obtained extraordinary privileges. The third cause of the downfall of the Mahratta power was the introduction of the element of trained but mercenary battalions of infantry and the decay of the time-honoured and patriotic militia. The knowledge of the art of making arms did not advance with the ambition or the extent of the dominions of the Peshwas, the importance and power of the navy was reduced, and the exigencies of fighting on the open plains by new methods of warfare threw into disrepair the hill forts which had rendered such excellent service to the Mahrattas in the early stages of their rise to power. In short, according to the learned lecturer, a spirit of exclusiveness and caste ascendancy, and disregard of the excellent policy laid down by Shivaji,—these led to the downfall of the great Mahratta power which at one time held sway over not only the Deccan but most of the Provinces in India. One has little hesitation in agreeing with the learned lecturer so far as the plea of the disregard of the general policy of Shivaji is concerned. But the argument of caste ascendancy is a thing which one hardly understands or appreciates. In the first place it is.



not quite correct to say that the Brahmins were exclusively in ascendancy. At any rate they were not at the top by any artificial or illegitimate method of power-grabbing. All along, even from the time of Shivaji, the Brahmins were recognised as good counsellors and before long they combined military genius with clerical wisdom. Such a combination must in any time prove very assertive. But it is to be noted that the Peshwas had all along studiously upheld the power, though latterly only symbolical, of the Satara Gadi. It was only towards the end of the Peshwai that the Brahmins, as a class and irrespective of the merits of individuals, came to have certain extraordinary privileges—which was indeed to be deprecated. But that can hardly be invested with the importance of a cause of the downfall of the Mahratta power. The real cause would seem to be the system of *personal* (and not caste) Government which was provided against by Shivaji but which came into vogue under the Peshwai. There was, moreover, an absence of the spirit of nationality, at least such a spirit had become all but extinct in the later days of the Peshwai.

Turning to the morals and manners of the Peshwai, we see that people were more superstitious than now, and what is perhaps remarkable is that the State would seem to be sharing in popular superstition and acting accordingly. This, however, is quite a minor matter. It may be interesting as a study of human nature but not of the least importance from the standpoint of politics. Any one could be only as wise as his generation in such a matter; but the Peshwas are according to the learned lecturer, to be congratulated upon the advanced views in social and religious matters which they had inculcated. The Diaries contain four instances of reconversion to caste under the countenance of the State. The advisability of this reform

few have ever doubted. The Diaries show that the reform was actually accomplished; and if the Mahratta Government had continued to this day there is little doubt that the practice of reconversion would have been completely established. Even as it is at present, such reconversion is permitted by the Shankaracharya, and the permission seems to be lying idle simply because no one has cared to avail himself of it. The enforcement of total abstinence by the Mahratta Government upon the Brahmins, the Shenwis and the Government officers generally, of which there is evidence in the Diaries, shows that the State can interfere in matters of morality to good purpose. According to the learned lecturer the Diaries prove that the Peshwas' government interfered in social and religious matters also as a matter of right. Thus the State prohibited the sale of girls, prohibited marriages within certain degrees of kinship, adjudicated upon claims to certain religious observances and administered equity relief in the matter of unconscionable social transaction. The facts are not denied. But it has to be remembered that in this instance it was the *Hindu* Government which interfered in social or religious matters concerning the *Hindus*. The Diaries or any other record, we are sure, can give no evidence of the Peshwas having regulated the social or religious customs of the Mahomedans for example. The point of the contrast is obvious. When the religion of the rulers is the same as that of the ruled, perhaps there would be no harm if the Government interfered in social or religious matters. But no one can go with Mr. Justice Ranade if he would rely upon the Diaries as affording an analogy in favour of his pet theory of State interference in social or religious matters under the British Government. Before concluding we must notice one or two points included in the comprehensive lecture of Mr. Justice Ranade. The lecturer

alluded to the fact of the wife of Sadashivrao Bhaoo of Panipat having been allowed to keep her hair and other ornaments till her death though the general belief was that Sadashivrao Bhaoo had fallen on the battle-field. Evidently this is an attempt on the part of Mr. Ranade to represent that widowhood was not "enforced" in the time of the Peshwas. But we think the facts do not lend themselves to such a construction. In the case of the wife of Sadashivrao Bhaoo her widowhood was *not a matter of fact but a matter of belief*. Parvati Bai, Sadashivrao's wife, chose to believe that her husband was alive, and as nobody had seen the dead body of her husband she had a perfectly legitimate right to indulge in that hopeful belief. Believing as she did, she wore not only her hair and ornaments, but even her *Kunkum*. That settles the point and takes away all ground from beneath the theory of the learned lecturer. Even at present, under similar circumstances, if a woman chose to believe that her husband was alive, even against the belief of all the world yet she would be allowed to wear her hair, and there are such cases to our knowledge. The above is not our plea for the enforced widowhood, but it shews that Mr. Justice Ranade is not quite correct historically as well as logically when he alludes to the case of Parvati Bai as one in which the State interfered to secure to a woman of their family exemption from that religious degradation. Then, again, Mr. Justice Ranade himself admits that the Diaries do not bear out the story of Parashuram Bhaoo Patwardhan having obtained the sanction of the religious preceptors for the remarriage of his daughter. Nor is the story borne out by the voluminous record of the Patwardhani Daftar which Mr. Khare of Miraj and others have carefully searched and sifted. We are here expressing no opinion upon the question of remarriage; but we only point

out how a document or a lecture which ought to be strictly historical is sometimes perverted by the prepossessions of the writer.

(1899.)

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## History of the Maratha People

( By C. A. Kincaid and D. B. Parasnis, Oxford University Press. )

"I have done my utmost," says Mr. Kincaid in his preface to the present book, "to avoid giving offence to my Indian readers. If by inadvertence I have done so I trust that they will extend me their forgiveness." A writer who has the humility to utter such sentiments can scarcely commit the offence of impropriety in deliberately ill judging the people about whom he may be writing. The Marathas certainly do not want to be flattered, they only want to be judged aright. But they had failed to get justice at the hands of even a historian like Grant Duff. Mr. Kincaid has not entered, in his first volume, in any elaborate disquisition upon the merits or demerits of the Marathas. Probably he has reserved the treatment of that part of his subject for the end of Vol. III. But throughout the present volume we find the author writing in a spirit of silent appreciation of the rise and the doing of the Marathas, from the time of the early dwellers of the Dandaka forest to the death of Shivaji whom Mr. Kincaid calls the greatest of Indian kings.

The trick of the old English writers had been to condemn Shivaji, the greatest Maratha, as a robber and a treacherous murderer; and when that was done it was easy to invite an inference that the nation, whom he represented in all that was good and great in them, also

deserved to be equally condemned. And it is precisely here that we find Mr. Kincaid making a departure from those who went before him. We shall select only one or two topics in Mr. Kincaid's treatment of Shivaji to see the spirit in which he has approached the history of the Marathas. The choice of a career is invariably the key which opens the secret tabernacle of the psychology of heroes. The time when Shivaji was about to come of age was apparently a most critical one for himself as well as for Maharashtra. And much might depend upon how Shivaji would make the choice of his career at such a time. And the choice which Shivaji deliberately made not only assured his own success in life but also the salvation of his entire nation Mr. Kincaid has discussed this subject with judicious care, and let us give his summing up in his own words as far as possible. As the son of a former regent and king-maker of Ahmednagar, and the scion of one of the illustrious Maratha families of his time, Shivaji was looked upon as a natural leader of the Marathas of his time. There were several courses open to him in which to direct his career as such leader. Like one of the Maratha barons of his time, Shivaji could have lived upon his father's estate, amused his leisure with strong drink, filled his zenana with the rustic beauties of the neighbourhood, and performed just as little military service as would enable him to retain such fiefs as he might inherit from his father. The second course was the one favoured by his tutor Dadoji Konddev. He could go to Bijapure, join the King's service as a subordinate of Shahaji as his own elder brother had done, and with him rise to a high place among the factious nobles who surrounded Mahomed Adil Shah. A third course open to Shivaji was to seek service at Delhi and make his private fortune in the coming

struggle between the Moghuls and the Mahomedan kingdoms of the Deccan. The son of the king-maker of Ahmednagar might have been simply welcomed and honours and Jahagirs showered upon him. There was yet another course open to Shivaji and that was to attempt the liberation of the Maratha race.

It goes without saying that the last was the most dangerous though the most honourable course for Shivaji. It was a wellnigh hopeless task, for after three centuries of slavery, the wish for freedom was all but dead, and lived, if at all, in a few hill tracts in the Konkan and the Maval. He could expect no aid from other Maratha nobles. Most other contemporary Maratha nobles aspired only to their own advancement at Court or enlargement of their fiefs at the expense of their neighbours. Without resources he must raise an army. He must inspire it by his own words and acts with high ideals. He must fight against his own relatives and countrymen. He must incur charges of treason and charges of unfilial conduct. In the end he would most likely see his own hopes shattered, his friends butchered and himself condemned to a cruel and a lingering death. Yet this was the course which he resolved to adopt. Once we know the choice made by Shivaji we can account for his abandonment of the other rival courses open to him. To the son of an illustrious politician like Shahaji a life of indolence, aggravated by wine and women, might have naturally failed to offer much temptation, though we know that Shivaji's own son, (and who could have a more inspiring and illustrious father?) succumbed to these temptations almost during Shivaji's own life-time. Bijapur was nearer to Shivaji than Delhi as a Court-royal where he might take up service and further tread in the footsteps of his own father. But Shivaji was well aware of the weakness of

the Bijapur Government. He knew that behind the glitter of the Court there were mismanagement and incapacity. To take up service at Delhi meant nothing less than the desertion of his own country and standing by, as a treacherous witness, while Aurangzeb's armies enslaved the Indian people and insulted their religion from the Bhima to Rameshwaram. For these reasons Shivaji abandoned the first three courses and adopted the fourth, not with the rash presumption of youth, says Mr. Kincaid, but after deep deliberate thought and after discussion with the friends of his boyhood and, the wonder of wonders, with his own mother, who, if she had been an ordinary woman of the world, might have implored, and perhaps successfully, her son to give up a career which was so fraught with risks and dangers. "More than 2,500 years before," says Mr. Kincaid, "three immortal Goddesses had called on another Eastern prince to decide questions very similar to those which now confronted Shivaji. But far other than that of Paris was the judgment of Shahaji's son. He turned aside from the rich promises of Hera and the voluptuous smiles of Aphrodite and without a single backward glance placed the golden fruit in the hands of Pallas Athene."

The parallel recalled to mind by Mr. Kincaid is singularly instructive. And it makes Shivaji shine all the more in his choice of a career which proved not only a career for himself but a career for his nation at large. We may give Dadoji Konddeo and Shivaji's mother all the credit that is their due in moulding and preparing Shivaji's mind for such a career. But the deciding factor in the situation is Shivaji himself. For if he had a mother to inspire him to choose the career of a king, he had also a father who would have liked him to take up the career of a mere vassal under a Mahomedan sovereign. In fact he hated

Shivaji throughout his life for not taking up such a career. In these circumstances why should Shivaji have spurned the advice and the example of his own father and followed the advice, which had not the benefit of an example as well, of his mother? The answer is that Shivaji himself was a Soul, a hero. It is true that nothing succeeds like success, and it is easy to imagine that in the peculiar circumstances of Shivaji, his mission and his choice might have been a failure, and that in that case Shivaji could not have been proclaimed by the world as anything better than a mere aspiring youth not blessed with discretion and wisdom. But taking of course success as a common factor in judging of men and their actions, we have to adjudge Shivaji to be a wonderful man, one in a hundred millions, who can be truly called a saviour of his race. English historians writing upon Maratha history have invariably failed to appreciate the significance of this aspect of Shivaji's life; and we must, therefore, feel thankful to Mr. Kincaid all the more for the service he has rendered to the Marathas in this respect.

### Shivaji And St. Patrick

The time for the annual Shri Shivaji festivals has come. The Hindu date of the birth of Shivaji coincides with the 19th day of April, and excepting where the day of Shivaji's coronation may be recorded as the day of the festival, the present function would be performed all over the Maharashtra. The controversy on the subject of this festival has, by this time, ceased to be particularly interesting as the opponents of the movements within the society itself have now found out the worthlessness of their objections, and



their imagination is not powerful enough to raise objections not already considered and answered. The sensation also, on the other hand, which the announcement of the Shivaji festival used for some time past to create in the mind of timid men, who were extremely susceptible to the faintest sign of Government displeasure, can no longer be revived as Government themselves have ceased to be scared and terrified at the red rag of a Shivaji festival, and have coolly resigned the impossible detection of sedition in the festival to the detective police with almost a feeling of disappointment. We may, therefore, now begin to think of bringing over both the social and political opponents of the festival movement to a more good humoured acceptance of the inevitable growth and popularity of that movement. But practically we need tackle only one kind of these opponents. For, the social opponents are mainly swayed by the attitude of Government in this matter, and to Government, therefore, we must address in the first instance and ask if they would not change their attitude and free their mind from foolish suspicions which do them as much injustice as to the friends of the festival movement. The intrinsic merits of the movement have been already discussed on more occasions than one. But we would change the argument this time and respectfully call upon Government to consider whether they ought not to show more, or at least as much, regard for a sentiment of nationality entertained by the people of the Maharashtra as that indulged in by the Irish people for instance. And it is not altogether difficult to demonstrate that the people of the Maharashtra have deserved of the British Government in India better than the Irish people have deserved of the British Government at home. We need not waste many words upon proving that the Irish people are at present far more disaffected than the Indian people may be supposed to be by the most un-

charitable Englishmen. In a speech, recently delivered in Ireland by a leading nationalist, it was argued that though the Conservatives pretended to refuse Home-rule to Ireland because the *Irish were disloyal*, the real fact was that the Irishmen were disloyal, because they were refused Home-rule. Now whether we regard disloyalty in the Irish people as a cause or effect, still that disloyalty is a fact, even on the admission of the Irish nationalist in question. But can anybody, even the worst Anglo-Indian, consciously say the same thing of the people of the Maharashtra? In another speech recently delivered also by an Irish nationalist, he plainly said that Ireland was too near to England to enable the Irish people to help themselves to long toms and rifles as the Boers had done, and, therefore, for some time, at any rate, their speeches and leagues alone must serve for arms. Who can say that the people of the Maharashtra, on the other hand, were ever guilty of entertaining such an idea as that? It may also be mentioned that though Irishmen have not been able to procure arms, still a number of them were recently found to be fighting with the Boers against the British in South Africa. Irish members of Parliament have openly pleaded for the Boers; and the members of the Dublin Corporation opposed even the vote of condolence on the occasion of the late Queen's death. And yet in the face of these facts what is the attitude we find the British Government, and even the Queen, maintaining towards the national aspiration of the Irish people? A year ago the Conservative Government passed a Bill to effect a greater extension of Local Self-government in Ireland; and this year the same Government is contemplating an inquiry into the national education in Ireland. But by far the most valuable and effective token of regard for the national aspirations of the Irish people was that given by the late Queen herself, who

a year ago graciously revived permission to the Irish regiments and Irishmen serving in the army to wear the shamrock which is a symbol of Irish nationality. This was a most pronounced recognition of the legitimacy of Irish national aspirations. On the 18th of last month again, when the annual St. Patrick day came round the royal tokens of pleasure were repeated this time by the King and the Queen. Irishmen were allowed to lay a wreath of shamrock upon the Queen's sarcophagus, and the Queen herself presented for boxes of shamrock with an autograph letter to the Irish regiments. In Ireland the Lord Lieutenant, that is to say the official representative of the King, attended service in the cathedral of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. A procession and a banquet were organised in honour of St. Patrick by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and the Unionists as well as the Nationalists were proud to parade in the streets with the shamrock in their hats or buttonholes. Here then is an object-lesson in which not only the different parties in Ireland are seen to cling together round a symbol of Irish nationality, for at least a single day, and in which the British Government also are found to officially countenance a brief indulgence in the elevating sentiment of nationality on the part of Irishmen. Can we not, therefore, call upon the social opponents of the Shivaji festival as well as the Government to reconsider their position in the light of the above facts? What is it they object to in this connection? Do they object to the spirit itself of the movement or the particular class of people to whose lot it has fallen to be its fearless and pronounced advocates? If it is the latter then it may be replied that the festival movement is not and cannot be a monopoly of the class of people referred to above. Let the moderate party do its own festival and secure the sympathy and patronage of the European and official classes

in this country. The Maharashtra is surely wide enough for two separate movements for the same object running on parallel lines of principle. To the spirit itself of the movement the social opponents cannot possibly object. For we cannot conceive that they are dead to all sense of a national aspiration. They cannot deny that Shivaji is the patron hero of the Maharashtra as much as St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland or St. George the patron saint of England. And will they not like to cherish the memory of Shivaji as a nucleus of the fine feeling of nationality? As for Government we may ask them if it is really more improper to allow the people of the Maharashtra to enliven their memory of Shivaji than to officially participate in the festival of the patron saint of Ireland, and in the circulation of the shamrock which is the symbol of the nationality of people some of whom openly yearn to take up arms against England and the others are actually fighting on the side of England's enemies?

## The Ramayana and the Mahabharata

### *A question of precedence*

That the hero of the Ramayana, Ram, lived and reigned before the hero of the Mahabharata, Krishna, on one has ever doubted. But a doubt has been raised, (though it is not shared by the vast majority of the Hindus), as to the sequence of time of the compilation of the two great epics in which the doings of those heroes are described. The doubt as to the precedence of the Ramayana over the Mahabharata has been raised only by one class of thinkers in oriental antiquities; but it has been also seriously

opposed by another class of the same kind of thinkers. Mr. R. C. Dutt, relying on a number of European scholars, and Dr. Bhandarkar belong to the former class; while Dr. Webber and others belong to the latter class. The argument used by those who supported the precedence of the Mahabharata over the Ramayana as well as those that opposed it were, however, more or less mainly based on matters of inference drawn from the social condition as indicated by the internal evidence in the two epics. In such matters of inference, however, there is much ground for an eternal difference of opinion; and the only really conclusive method is that of minutely scrutinising the text of these poems and determining their relative chronology with the aid of ( 1 ) possible cross references to the story and characters and ( 2 ) quotations from the text of the one found in the other. By pursuing this method to a certain extent Dr. Webber has arrived at the conclusion that while the Mahabharata may have been composed in the second century A. D., the Ramayana may have been composed in the first century A. D. Dr. Webber indeed makes the Ramayana *too modern*. But the absolute chronology of that epic is not here the point. Dr. Webber's conclusion is indeed sound so far as it goes; but the capabilities of the latter method, described above, for making the same proof almost conclusive and irrebuttable are, in our opinion, successfully demonstrated by Mr. M. G. Abhyankar, who has recently treated the subject in a well reasoned contribution to the *Vividha-Dnyana-Vistara* of Bombay. Mr. Abhyankar has quoted chapter and verse to prove that, apart from the indications of the more ancient social life spread broadcast in the Ramayana, the author of the Mahabharata has not only largely, deliberately and specifically referred to the name and the characters of the other epic, but quoted *whole* verses from it which

decide indisputably the question of the precedence in time between the two epics. With regard to the innumerable references in the Mahabharata to the general story of Rama and its incidents, it may perhaps be argued that both the Ramayana and Mahabharata may have drawn the names, the story and the detailed incidents from a third poem or story altogether which may have been familiar both to the authors of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, but which may have been since forgotten. But no such explanation can possibly account for whole verses *quoted word for word* from the Ramayana into the Mahabharata, the quotations, moreover, being clearly acknowledged. The only argument against such quotations perhaps may be that they are interpolations. But that argument is more often than not improperly used. The theory of interpolations can be made serviceable to condemn *anything* in the absence of proper authentication. But a heavy burden of proof lies on the head of those who allege interpolation; and the natural safeguards against an improper use of the argument of interpolation are the considerations of context, propriety and language. The more remarkable of the quotations in the Mahabharata from the Ramayana, relied on by Mr. Abhyankar, will be found after a careful inquiry to satisfy all these tests. Besides, these quotations are so numerous and so distributed broadcast throughout the Mahabharata that it would be simply audacious for any one to say that they are interpolations, if it could be said at all without sacrificing the context or the sense; and in that case too we cannot but suppose that the interpolations must have been studiously framed and inserted by one, who anticipated a controversy like the present and sat down to the work of fabrication on such a large scale. The different editions of the Ramayana, however, written in ancient times and preserved in proper custody, unanimously revolt

against such an absurd theory of wholesale fabrication. When once the ground work of such internal evidence is established, confirmation may be sought for and obtained of the fact of the priority of the Ramayana over the Mahabharata by a comparison of the social condition depicted in the two epics. Mr. Dutt, being of the opinion that the Mahabharata is the older of the two, has thus observed in his History of Ancient India :—"One feels on reading the Ramayana that the heroic age of India had passed and centuries of residence in the Gangetic valley had produced an enervating effect on the Aryans (of the time of the Ramayana). We miss the heroic if somewhat rude and sturdy manners and incidents which mark the Mahabharata. A change had come over the spirit of the nation, and if princes and men had become more polished and law-abiding they had become less heroic." It seems that Mr. Dutt has probably mistaken the simplicity of the Ramayana for polish. But Mr. Abhyankar has clearly shown that so far as the sciences at least of Astronomy, Medicine and Navigation are concerned, the Ramayana shews less development of these than the other epic. Thus while only two or three *Nakshatras* are mentioned in the Ramayana the Mahabharata mentions fifteen *Nakshatras*. To the author of the Ramayana, fever and optical diseases only were known; the author of the Mahabharata knew consumption, remittent fever, dropsy, and many other diseases and also the advanced systematization of the three principles of disease, viz. *rat*, *pitta*, and *kaf*, and the principles of the susceptibility of the *fœtus* to outward influences. The evidence of navigation is more convincing still. The account of Rama's crossing the ocean to Lanka, as given in the Ramayana, says that Rama prepared a kind of floating bridge or flotilla by launching huge beams of wood and then putting stones upon them.

The account of the same event as given in the Mahabharata says that there were a number of boats available for Rama, but he refused to make use of them on the ground that otherwise 'the coasting trade will suffer.' It need hardly be pointed out that this idea of a large number of busy coasting boats and Rama refusing to make use of this merchantile marine out of regard for the considerations of *trade* is distinctly modern. This process of comparing the social conditions at the time of the two epics is endless. But it strikingly corroborates Mr. Abhyankar's theory that the Ramayana is more ancient than the Mahabharata.

## A New Book On the Mahabharata

### I

If India can pride herself on anything she can pride herself on the possession of two things above all others, on the possession of the Himalayas, the highest mountain range in the world, and on the possession of her national epic, the Mahabharata, which alike in its unbounded scope and its loftiness of ideals throws all other epics, European as well as Asiatic, into the shade. The *Illiad*, the *Odessey* and the *Æneid* put together do not equal its bulk and as for the complexity and diversity of its subject matter we shall have to search for and search in vain the whole range of universal literature from the Norwegian Sagas down to Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' before we come across its equal. But the Mahabharata, supreme though it is as an epic, is something more than an epic. Its author or authors—and we may incidentally remark here that Mr. Vaidya has almost conclusively proved that the Bharata is the product of more brains than one—have tried to



make it a repository of all learning, indeed of all things that can ever be known or knowable to the sons of men. Thus the Mahabharata in its present form may be regarded as a sort of political encyclopædia of ancient Arvan history, wisdom and learning. But though the Bharata is an encyclopædia, it has never lost the human interest which only an epic can command. It is this unique nature of the Bharata which has made it an astounding monument of literary skill which for centuries past has exercised a healthy and ever-abiding influence on the minds of the vast Hindu population of the Indian continent. Poets and dramatists, both of ancient and modern times, have derived their inspiration from the many curious episodes and incidents which the Bharata contains. Humbler people in their hours of trial have by way of solacing their perturbed minds, longingly turned to the sage and consoling words of wisdom and advice in which the Bharata is known to abound. Thus a critical study of the Mahabharata by one who has devoted some years to the consideration of the subject dealt with, ought certainly to be welcomed by every one who cares for the elucidation of the many obscure matters which enshroud within an atmosphere of doubt and mystery the whole history of Indian antiquity.

The first question to which Mr. Vaidya directs his endeavours is as to whether the Mahabharata is the work of one individual author or whether it is the result of the combined efforts and literary skill of various editors and collaborators who amplified from time to time, a poem of originally very moderate proportions. The traditional belief is that Vyasa is the sole author of the Māhabharata. But the personality of Vyasa is itself an unknown quantity. He is the reputed author of Sanskrit works too numerous to mention. The ultra-orthodox section of the Hindu

community of course believe that Vyasa was a historical personality and that he was really the author of the many books which pass under his authorship. But ignoring this dogmatic view which can hardly hold water when it is subjected to the fierce search-light of logical reasoning, we are brought face to face with the fact that the Mahabharata itself contains ample evidence in support of the contention that the grand epic in its complete and finished shape is not the handiwork of one genius, but that it has been revised and amplified by at least two persons, *viz.* Vaishampayan and Sauti, after its original composition by Vyasa. Independently of this internal evidence the probabilities are also in favour of the view that Mahabharata, as we know it, owes its magnitude and its wealth of anecdotes, episodes and sage aphorisms to the plurality of its authors. The first chapter of Mr. Vaidya's book is solely devoted to the consideration of this topic and though his treatment of it is rather scrappy considering the importance of the question, his line of reasoning is convincing and almost unanswerable and should meet with general approval from all dispassionate scholars.

Having disposed of the plurality of authors who have a hand in the composition of the Mahabharata, Mr. Vaidya launches on a speculation with regard to the approximate date at which the Mahabharata assumed its present form. All Sanskritists are very fond of indulging in endless and sometimes very abstruse discussions as to the approximate period of antiquity when a particular Sanskrit work might have been composed. These discussions sometimes proceed on very flimsy assumptions and finally end in making confusion worse confounded. To the layman these learned discussions of the scholars become more a source of annoyance than instruction or enlightenment as no two reputed Sanskritists agree as to the date assigned to the com-

position of any Sanskrit work, the origin of which is at all shrouded in misty uncertainty. The only definite result which such discussions lead to is to fix the two limits of time within which the composition of the work under consideration must of necessity have taken place. These two limits are sometimes separated from each other by centuries and what benefit is conferred on ancient chronology by saying that a certain work must have been composed, say between 5,000 B. C. and 1,000 B. C. is more than we can pretend to understand. We by no means want to insinuate that the date assigned to the composition of the Mahabharata is as uncertain and elastic as the one we cited in our hypothetical illustration. But we entertain an averseness to such scholastic discussions and that aversion is not removed by Mr Vaidya's manner of fixing the date of the composition of the Mahabharata. For instance here is the final conclusion at which he arrives after laboriously wading through a heap of astronomical and other data. "If we take all the evidence heretofore detailed into consideration, we may conclude *generally* that the Mahabharata assumed its present form between three to one hundred B. C." Weber on the other hand places the composition of the Mahabharata some time between 300 B. C. and 100 A. D. But Weber's line of reasoning is conclusively shown by Mr. Vaidya to have been vitiated by an erroneous assumption that Megasthenes did not know of the existence of an epic like Mahabharata whereas all that we can legitimately infer is that only the fragments of Megasthenes's work now extant do not make any mention of the Epic. The date at which Mr. Vaidya arrives is based on astronomical considerations into the merit of which it will be out of place in a newspaper article to enter.

Talking of dates it is significant to bear in mind that the discussion above summarised refers only to the proba-

ble date of composition of the Mahabharata. What is even of more absorbing interest is the probable date which may be assigned to the great war which is the central theme of the great epic. That the eighteen days' battle which took place on the plains of Kurukshetra between the Kouravas and the Pandavas was a historic occurrence, nobody can possibly deny. It becomes then of the highest importance to know exactly when the great civil warfare and internicine strife decimated almost the whole of the Kuru clan. The fixing of the exact date of the war is a task which is as difficult as it is alluring and there are as many opinions held about this date as probably there are Sanskrit scholars. Mr. Modak puts it somewhere near 5,600 B. C. Varaha Mihir and those who follow him 'believe that the battle was fought in 2604 B. C.' European scholars locate it about 1,500 B. C. Mr. Dutt regards 1,250 B. C. as the probable date of the war. Mr. Ayyar to whom we must give the credit of being very exact even to the day, drags the date down to the 13th of October 1194 B. C. Mr. Vaidya for his own part follows the orthodox opinion and from calculations as to the beginning of the Kali age assigns the year 3101 B. C. as the one which witnessed the great conflict at Kurukshetra. When doctors differ it is not for laymen to decide and when there is such bewildering diversity of opinion among Sanskrit scholars the ordinary reader is disposed to exclaim 'A plague on your dates and your calculations.' Mr. Vaidya has, however, succeeded in pointing out the untenability of some of the dates mentioned above and he has marshalled forth copious evidence in support of his own belief that the battle must have been fought some time between 3100 B. C. and 2000 B. C. The chapter which is occupied with the consideration of these dates is the most erudite and scholarly in the whole book and we recommend a perusal of it to those who may like

to read a piece of very dry but able and close reasoning. We shall revert to a consideration of the remaining interesting topics in the book on a future occasion.

## II

Towards the close of our last article on the subject we gave a bald statement showing the variety of opinions held by Sanskrit scholars as to the probable date at which the great Bharata war must have been fought. Most of the scholars who have endeavoured to fix this date have proceeded on calculations and have based their opinions on conclusions which they contend have almost a mathematical precision. If we can expect absolute certainty in any speculation of an academical character we certainly have a right to expect it in the domain of mathematics. How is it then that we find no two men agreeing as to the date which is to be assigned to the Bharata war? If the mathematicians cannot agree among themselves as to the exact connotation of the various terms they employ it is but natural to expect that the conclusions at which they arrive will possess only a nebulous certainty. This is just what has occurred in the present instance. Otherwise the conclusion at which Mr. Modak arrives that the Bharata war must have been fought about 700 years ago or about 5000 B. C. would have been unimpeachable at least on mathematical grounds. Mr. Modak's line of reasoning, reduced to its simplest form, is something like this: "At the time of the Bharata war the vernal equinox was situated near Punarvasu. The vernal equinox recedes one degree in 72 years. Since the time of the Bharata war the vernal equinox has receded 95 degrees. So by the rule of three the Bharata war must have been fought nearly 7000 years ago from now—Q. E. D." But the task of fixing the date

of Bharata war is not so simple as the simple rule of three mentioned above would make us believe. For, as Mr. Vaidya informs us the Nakshatras are of two kinds, the conventional and the real; and to which set a particular नक्षत्र is meant to belong will depend more or less on the whim of the person alluding to it and we cannot be sure whether the Punarvasu Nakshatra mentioned in the Bharata is the Sayana one or the Nirayana one. Thus Mr. Modak's method of fixing the date of the Bharata is found to be quite unsafe. In the same manner Mr. Vaidya has tried to controvert and demolish the theories of Messrs. Dutt, Weber and others and following the orthodox opinion that the end of the Bharata war ushered in what is known as the Kaliyuga, he places the great conflict somewhere between 3100 B. C. and 2000 B. C.

Mr. Vaidya also advances another proof in support of his belief that the Bharata war must have been fought about the period he has assigned to it. We have not been able to fully appreciate Mr. Vaidya's line of reasoning owing to his habit of condensing all he has to say in as few sentences as possible. But what he wants to suggest is probably this. The Shatapatha Brahman contains references to some incidents in the Mahabharata as if they were contemporary events. From this it is legitimate to infer that the composition of Shatapatha Brahman was contemporaneous with the Bharata war. Now according to the calculations made by the late Mr. Dixit—and we may parenthetically observe that Mr. Dixit was a high authority on all astronomical matters—the Shatapatha Brahman must have been composed some time about 3,000 B. C. And if the composition of Shatapatha Brahman was contemporaneous with some events described in the Mahabharata, it stands to reason that the Bharata war was also an occurrence which may safely be located in the

same period of antiquity as witnessed the composition of that Brahman. -

It is a little unsatisfactory that in fixing the probable date of the Mahabharata war all scholars have confined their attention solely to the conclusions which can be derived from astronomical data. There is another fruitful source of inquiry which should lead us if properly pursued to somewhere near the truth. There is one very strong fact in the life of the Pandavas, which baffles explanation. Even the author of the Mahabharata cannot sufficiently account for and cannot sufficiently explain away the marriage of one woman Draupadi with five brothers. So far as the history of Indian antiquity is known at the present moment it cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty when the practice of polyandry was prevalent in ancient India and at what period of antiquity it went totally out of fashion, even if it was not rigorously condemned. Mr. Vaidya quotes a sentence from the Bharata itself which clearly shows that the practice of polyandry was tolerated in some families of high social standing. Yudhishtira himself says apologetically to the king of the Panchalas that 'this is our family custom and we do not feel we are transgressing Dharma in following it.' Mr. Vaidya calls this sentence a fossil and so it really is. So then at the time when the Pandavas were married polyandry was at least tolerated even if it was not largely prevalent in families which claimed the high pretensions of tracing their descent directly from the Moon. It becomes thus pertinent to inquire at what period of antiquity polyandry was prevalent in India even in princely Aryan families. If such an ethnological inquiry were diligently pursued it should yield us some sort of satisfactory results. We would like to call upon some aspiring students of Indian antiquity to launch on such an

inquiry. What materials are available to pursue it with profitable results is more than we can say. But that the nature of the inquiry is sufficiently alluring to tempt the efforts of intrepid seekers after truth, nobody can possibly deny. There is another thing to which also we may incidentally draw attention. The practice of Niyoga seems to have been prevalent at the time when the Pandavas and their immediate progenitors lived. Pandu, Dhritarashtra and Vidura were all the offsprings of Niyoga. It will thus materially help us in fixing the date of the Bharata war, if we can ascertain when the practice of Niyoga was prevalent in India and when it came to be condemned as immoral.

After having fixed the dates of the Mahabharata war and the composition of the great Epic, Mr. Vaidya proceeds to consider the question whether the Pandavas were real or merely apocryphal heroes. We wonder who was responsible for originally starting such a discussion at all. Before the modern methods of dealing with such topics came into vogue, nobody with any pretence to sanity would have dared to call into question the very existence of the heroes of the great Indian Epic. But when once academic discussions are started nobody can foresee to what extreme they will reach. It was, we believe, Weber who must be given the credit for having started this curious controversy. But we are really surprised to find that Mr. Dutt follows Weber and says that the Pandavas must be set down as mythical heroes.' The evidence which is advanced in support of the contention that the Pandavas are mythical heroes, is of the flimsiest character and Mr. Vaidya does well not to devote too much space to the refutation of a position which is so palpably absurd and untenable. Though modern writers of novels excel in creating and inventing merely fictitious characters, it was



not an art with which the ancient writers in India were acquainted. No inspired bards waste their god-given poetic power in recounting the deeds of imaginary heroes. No national epics are sung in praise of doubtful nonentities. The events narrated in the Mahabharata bear on their very face such an impress of truth and genuineness that it is almost impossible to doubt their reality. Even if we cannot exactly say when the Pandavas lived and died, the Mahabharata contains ample evidence which invests them with the character of historical personages. Logical reasoning may be employed to prove anything and it was we believe Whateley who, in one of his essays, has shown how by the strictest rules of logic a faultless case may be made out against the very existence of many historical personages who had died but a few years previously. It is profitless to interest ourselves in such discussions and we agree with Mr. Vaidya in holding that for all practical purposes the Pandavas must be regarded as real and not imaginary heroes.

More than half of Mr. Vaidya's book is taken up with the consideration of the questions we have detailed above. The concluding portion gives a succinct summary of the lives of the Pandavas and a few appendices which are annexed at the end give more detailed information with regard to the controversial topics involved in the book. Altogether the work is the result of much painstaking research and study and such publications by Indian Scholars are very few and far between. We hope the book will meet with generous patronage from all who care for the advancement of Sanskrit antiquarian studies and thus Mr. Vaidya will be encouraged to publish two more works of a kindred nature which he assures us he has in contemplation.

(29-1-1903)

the College without the saving touch of realism about the College life as it was and is being lived by the inmates of the quarters attached to it. And there is no gainsaying the fact that apart from College life the College itself is not much to any *Deccanian*. The setting of the traditions of the College during the half century of life it has recently completed is no doubt a splendid asset ; but it is common property. The only thing that fits a graduate or an under-graduate therein and enables him to look upon the whole with an enjoyable feeling of ownership is the year or years of College life that he may have been privileged to spend within the dear and enchanted precincts. Looking at the matter from this point of view one may say that Prof. Fraser has correctly outlined the desert, but that many a green oasis within is yet to be, and it may be hoped will soon be, filled by those for whom he has kindly led the way.

From the 'General History' of the College with which the book opens one learns that the institution owes its origin to the Dakshina fund which was founded by Mr. Elphinstone for the encouragement of Brahmanic learning; and it has even to this day maintained its character as essentially a Brahmanic institution. No doubt, it is no longer a mere Sanskrit College, but an overwhelming majority of the students therein has always been made up of Brahmins drawn from the Deccan, the Gujrath and the Carnatic. To the old Sanskrit College an English School was added in 1842 and the two were amalgamated in 1851 to form the 'Poona College' which was housed in the Vishrambag. The 'unsettling politics' of Poona were felt even as early as 1858, and a proposal to transfer the College from Poona to Ahmednagar was, we are told, actually made. The times must have been really very trying then, and the present writer very well remembers

## Deccan College

( *A Review* )

We have to thank Professor Fraser for a copy of his little book—'Deccan College, a Retrospect, 1851-1901' which he has so kindly sent us for review in these columns, and we may as well assure him that scarcely has any other book, with a similar claim on the present writer, afforded him as much pleasure in the task of a review as the present one. There are books and books which have to be read and sometimes to be merely drudged through out of a sense of duty or courtesy. But 'Deccan College' must be a name to conjure with in the case of those who had once the privilege to belong to that institution; and the very title of this book might be expected, by awakening fond and cherished associations, to secure some of the best conditions as to mood and mental attitude under which an author's production was ever read: No doubt, as Prof. Fraser himself remarks, it was to be wished that the chronicles of an old and interesting institution like the Deccan College had been written by one who was himself a past student of the College. But the author is certainly to be congratulated upon the success with which he has entered into the spirit of a warm and ideal *Deccanian*, and demonstrated to past as well as present students of the College the way in which justice should be practically done to an *Alma Mater* by her grateful sons. And yet nothing can be so evident as the author's inability to overcome the distance between his mind and the subject of his industrious compilation. For he has approached it only as a stranger, though a most sympathetic stranger, and it is owing to this factor in the personal equation of the author that we have in the book only a dry record of

fessors are yet to be built, but the general feeling seems to be that the proximity of professorial to the students' quarters cannot possibly be fruitful of the results expected of it, so far at least as one may judge of the matter from the experience of the Principal's quarters built in 1893.

The information given in the chapter on early curriculum is interesting as affording a basis for comparison with the College studies of to-day. The features of the oldest system seem to have been a dislike for Marathi, a love for Sanskrit and indifference to English; but gradually English made head-way and won the race and Sanskrit took a secondary place in the affections of the students, a reaction in favour of Marathi latterly taking place perhaps as a counterbalance. Romantic must be the time when the students had to copy out Milton's *Comus* for want of a good edition, but the advance made by the love of English at such an early date can easily be accounted for by a comparison of the present text-books with those which the students had then to read and especially by their having the privilege of English being taught to them by men like Sir Edwin Arnold. And whether it be superstitious or rational, the belief still exists that the older graduates were more proficient in English composition as well as knowledge of English literature. In later times also there were students, like Prof. K. B. Pathak for instance, who could repeat lines after lines from Shakespeare. But we are afraid that the study of English is not nowadays as attractive as it was before. As for Sanskrit, the system of teaching has now undoubtedly been changed for the better; but the discouragement of the old Shastris has practically led to the extinction of the race of those profound repositories of Sanskrit learning who once adorned the College and were the admiration of European Professors of Sanskrit. As regards Marathi, Prof. Fraser

would seem to have made out a case against the fate of that language by recording the indifference of old students to study it. In 1865 the teaching of Marathi was discontinued, and it continues to be proscribed to this day. But a reaction in its favour has set in, and it may be hoped that Marathi will soon be recognised as a subject of College study.

The staff of the Deccan College has always been made up of distinguished men, though latterly the original standard does not seem to have been maintained. Men like Principals Wordsworth, Oxenham, Kero Laxman and Selby, and Professors like Martin Haugh, Bhandarkar and Bain would do credit to any European University: and so far as teaching is concerned they are both admired and honoured by the students. They have also been what College Professors ought to be, repositories of learning with up-to-date information in their respective branches. But it may be remarked that the system of discipline, as well as tuition has been such that never was there much of personal contact between the students and the Professors and the personal examples of the latter had no appreciable influence on the formation of the character of the former.

The notes made by Professor Fraser on the different Professors of the College are valuable and fair. Thus for instance, he does not regard it as a failing in a Professor to aspire to be popular among the student world or the Native community, and his appreciation of Dr. Wordsworth, admittedly the most respected and most popular among both these classes, shows that the author has not yet become a scoffer or learnt to affect to despise popularity. Principal Wordsworth, says Professor Fraser, occupied a supreme place in the esteem and affection of educated Natives on this side of India. In Principal Wordsworth the people also outside the College felt

that they had a personal and an active friend, a champion of Native character and a supporter of their political advancement. "Pride of race was a notion he detested, and where he suspected it he never failed to attack it," as in his letters to the press on the occasion of the libel Bill controversy. And the contrast which he affords with many other Professors of the Deccan College that came before and after him is very striking, though it may be passingly noted that the material of students or people with which Professor Wordsworth had to deal was about the same in quality and character as that with which others had or have to do.

Professor Fraser's remarks on "student life" in the Deccan College shew that he has got practically no insight into it as yet. But he is not at all to blame for this. And it is in this branch of the subject that any old student of the College, who has also kept himself in touch with the student life up-to-date, may supplement the labours of and back up the *esprit de corps* evinced by Professor Fraser. The only remark of his own offered by the author in this connection is sensible and as follows:—"This student life is a world in which the European Professor never enters; but little indications do not escape him, which prove that there is such a thing as common sentiment in it and manners are cultivated."

A list of old students has been appended to the book under review. We wish it were prepared more carefully. Professor Fraser cannot be personally held responsible for its shortcomings, for it is practically prepared by Mr. K. B. Marathe and Mr. G. J. Agashe. And we are sorry to find that even in such a task the two Native advisers of the author would appear to have made an exhibition of their political tendencies. For in this list we find that while the careers of Messrs. Chiplunkar, Agarkar, Apte

and others are given at some length, the only description given of Mr. Tilak, for instance, is simply this:—"B. G. Tilak, LL.B." Mr. Agarkar is mentioned as the former editor of the *Kesari* and a contributor to the *Mahratta*; but the fact of Mr. Tilak being the present editor of the *Kesari* is altogether ignored. Also while his stray verses and his life of "a Promising Pupil (1) of the Female High School" are seriously put to the credit of Mr. Agashe himself as making up the distinction of this distinguished *litterateur*, and while a few sketchy translations of some science primers are mentioned as the splendid literary work of Mr. Marathe himself, poor Mr. Tilak's poor "*Orion*" is quietly passed over; though it may be mentioned in passing that on this very subject of his *Orion*, the Deccan College gathering in 1891 listened to Mr. Tilak's lecture as the principal literary function of the College festival that year. Times may have changed, and Mr. Tilak may have now come to be hated; but taken all in all, he is still a product of the Deccan College; and it reflects unfairness of mind on Mr. Fraser or his advisers, whoever may be responsible in the matter, to have made such a silly attempt to put an extinguisher upon Mr. Tilak's reputation as a brilliant Deccanian and to have made no mention of his having been a bright mathematician, a Professor of the Fergusson College, a Fellow of the University and a member of the Legislative Council. The author might as well have mentioned that he was twice convicted, once for defamation and once for sedition, and should have left the readers to judge of the result after the set-off. But it becomes the height of unfairmindedness for his advisers, if not the author himself, to refuse to Mr. Tilak his due as a son of his *Alma Mater* in her record.

But on the whole we congratulate Prof. Fraser upon the interesting chronicles that he has recorded of the

Deccan College. Their interest will no doubt be confined more or less to the student world of the College; but there are many directions in which the chronicles could be added to; and we think the *Deccan College Quarterly* is the proper medium through which the supplements should be published from time to time and then incorporated into the second edition of the book. Old students of the College may be rightfully asked to take the present book as a basis and to make their contributions of anecdotes and reminiscences of College life through the *Quarterly*.

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### A Biography of Mr. Justice Ranade

A few weeks ago, one of the most enthusiastic admirers of Mr. Ranade, we mean, R. B. G. A. Mankar, M.A., LL. B., published two small volumes purporting to be a sketch of his life and attempting to give a review of his numerous speeches and writings; and though these volumes by no means satisfy the universal curiosity to know everything about that great man, still they very successfully stimulate it. On going through Mr. Mankar's volume the reader must say to himself, "I wonder if this is all that is worth knowing about the man who had a very remarkable personality and who practically supplied motive power for much of the intellectual and progressive activity not only of his province, but of the whole of this country?" For we must confess that though Mr. Mankar has brought all the love and admiration he possessed for Mr. Ranade to bear on his self-imposed task, still both for want of the proper material, and to a certain extent also for the lack of skill in dealing with even such



material as was actually available, the author has produced only a mass of dull and uninspiring reading. The life-story is very briefly told and does not go beyond narrating a few broad facts relating to Mr. Ranade's public career; and the review of his speeches and writings is a mere summary of some of them. It nowhere appears as if the biography is written by an intimate friend of its subject of about twenty years standing; and what is most unaccountable is that Mr. Mankar has not been able to insert even a single letter written by Mr. Ranade to any one; whereas presumably and judging by the vast correspondence that Mr. Ranade kept up and the confidence which several still surviving friends enjoyed at his hands, there ought to be at least a hundred which would be worth publishing. Neither the personality of the subject of the biography nor that of its author in relation to the former is to be seen imported anywhere in the sketch, either as giving enchantment to the incidents related or as affording a vantage ground to the biographer for delineation or analysis of Mr. Ranade's character. Whereas anybody who has read Swami Ramkrishna's life by Prof. Max-Muller, for instance, would admit that even a stranger can write a biography with success, provided he takes the necessary trouble to collect and digest material therefor, and enter into the spirit of the character of its subject. With regard to the biography of Mr. Ranade, indeed we know that the documentary material therefor has unfortunately fallen into different hands; and that it is not regarded as practicable that it should be concentrated. But even making allowance for this fact we do not think that the biography published by Mr. Mankar represents any industrious attempt to collect even such information as traditional accounts, in the keeping of personal friends of Mr. Ranade, and the newspaper files would have afforded.

We have observed above that Mr. Mankar's biography has failed to become inspiring; and that is for two reasons. First of all, Mr. Mankar has not been at pains to hit at the central feature of Mr. Ranade's public character, and secondly, the work has been attempted as a history of Mr. Ranade as an individual, and not as a man of his times; whereas most of the interest attaching to his career is owing to his being a man of his times more than anything else. Speaking of this latter reason first, we think we might in this connection point out what Mr. Ranade himself thought of the matter. "Strange to say," writes Mr. Mankar, "Mr. Ranade was very little disposed to afford me any information about his life. He rather tried to dissuade me from the attempt and to induce me to write a history of our times." As it is, the life story told by Mr. Mankar has got no background to it, so to say, and, therefore, does not come out well. Thus Mr. Ranade cannot be an object of interest in being so much of a brilliant graduate as the leader of a race of men educated in the new style; not so much of a man having filled high offices as having ascended the ladder of official honours in spite of the difficulties created in his way by his race and colour; not so much of a political worker as a man leading the double life of a loyal servant devoted to Government and yet at the same time being a sincere patriot at heart; and not so much of a social reformer, as the conscious joining link between social ideals on the one hand and social traditions on the other. In a biography, therefore, of a man like Mr. Ranade, we should naturally expect a readable and faithful account of, for instance, the void of public activity when Mr. Ranade came upon the scene; the way in which first attempts at public life were understood and treated by Government; the turbid time through

which Poona and the Deccan passed about the year 1878; the early harvest of public spirit in the form of the creation of the New English School and the variety of public pursuits into which the activity of its founders branched off; the reaction that gradually set against the social reform movement; the impetus given to radicalism in matters political; the steady output and self-vindication of a new and liberal education; the birth of our Congresses and Conferences; and the latest, though not the least, the awakening of the public mind to the need of the propagation of a national system of Political Economy and patriotic appreciation of and research into Indian history. In most of these phases of public activity, Mr. Ranade had taken a prominent part in one way or another; and no life-story of Mr. Ranade can be complete or even readable which does not attempt to take such a review of the wide region indicated by the above mentioned land-marks.

We cannot close our review of Mr. Mankar's book without remarking that the author has shewn a lamentable lack of the critical spirit which alone could have made his biography pleasant or effective. A biography need not be only a collaboration of praises; and though like every other biographer, he may have regarded himself as "a literary vassal, bound by the immemorial law of his tenure to render homage, aids, reliefs and all other customary services to his lord", still Mr. Mankar might remember that the object of writing the biography of a human hero is likely to be defeated if the reader detects that it contains after all only worship and no mental analysis of the hero's character or a discrimination between its good and bad points. To do this one need not be irreverent but only out-spoken.

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(14-12-1902)

## The Ranade Economic Institute

On Thursday last, the Ranade Industrial and Economic Institute was opened at Poona by His Excellency Sir George Clarke. The report of the Ranade Memorial Committee of Poona, read by the Hon. Mr. Gokhale before the grand assembly which witnessed the opening ceremony of this worthy memorial to a worthy citizen of Poona, exhaustively deals with the details of the work of the Committee, the funds collected by it, and the scheme of purposes as well as of the management of those funds. Mr. Ranade, though a citizen of India, or of the world for the matter of that, was a peculiar possession of Poona. Poona's pride of Ranade was as much justified as Ranade's pride of Poona. As Dr. Bhandarkar told the audience in his thanks-giving speech towards the end of the proceedings, Mr. Ranade would never admit that Poona was a suburb of Bombay but would insist that Bombay was a suburb of Poona. Local patriotism has not really that antithesis to offer to a genuine cosmopolitan spirit of heart which some dense headed people often suppose it does. Local patriotism is only the fulcrum—the inevitable pin-point on which even a world-embracing cosmopolitan spirit must rest if it may produce any tangible and concrete result. The Bombay Memorial Committee may be said to have shown a proper appreciation of this aspect of things when, though it would not yield to the Poona Committee in its enthusiasm over raising a provincial memorial to Mr. Ranade, it agreed to allow the latter to treat the Deccan as an ear-marked preserve for raising subscriptions to a Poona Memorial to the dear departed.

The Poona Committee on the other hand justified the demand for a special and local memorial by collecting a

Mr. Joshi selected for his studies. He never deals in superficialities, but always comes to close quarters with the subject in hand, and treats it with the ease and ability of one who has completely mastered it. Every paper in the volume now before us bristles with facts and figures, and every statement or piece of information is assigned its proper authority or source. Administrative questions and Indian Economics seem to be Hon. Mr. Joshi's special strong points, and in these he is thoroughly at home. The first set of six papers in the volume deals with Indian Finance, and in these Mr. Joshi puts in a strong plea for the spirit of economy in Indian administration and management of the Indian exchequer in accordance with a policy which would do full justice to the claims of the Indian people. Though the conditions described in the Note on Retrenchment as making for economy, may perhaps now be only looked upon more as a matter of history, yet the plea for financial economy is as effective to-day as ever. Mr. Joshi's strong protest against a reckless military policy, involving crores of rupees on fresh promenades and quests of "scientific frontiers," is also probably as effective to-day. So also the protest against excessive expenditure on the Public Works, both civil and military. The discussion of the Salt-policy of the Government occupies nearly fifty pages, and in these one finds the gruesome history of the gradual displacement of the indigenous salt industry of the land by the imported article—a history which this industry shares in common with several others. The effective plea which Mr. Joshi then puts in for adopting the policy of sterling debt and for having an Imperial guarantee for India's loans, is also as fresh to-day. The progress of the railway rake too is pointedly noted in this section, but a fuller consideration of the railway policy from the Indian economic point of

handsome sum of about a lakh of rupees—a sum which, as observed by Mr. Gokhale, is really creditable to the Maharashtra, when we remember that the Mahrattas are peculiarly poor in coin. There has no doubt been some delay in giving the memorial a local habitation and a name. But in the first years that elapsed after Mr. Ranade's death the Deccan was in the grip of the plague; and if latterly, after the collection of subscriptions was completed, some time was spent in thinking out the idea of the memorial and in waiting for such generally favourable times as are necessary for a work of this kind, not the least fault could be found with it. We must also remember, that the whole memorial movement, from the beginning to its present development was the work of a single man, we mean the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, who though assisted no doubt by a few intimate friends and fellow-workers around him, was the real soul of the movement. It was Mr. Gokhale's ambition to raise a suitable memorial to his loved Guru—his friend, philosopher, and guide—in Poona; the place at first of his own initiation and novitiate with the great master, and the place throughout of their joint patriotic labours. And those alone who personally know how Mr. Gokhale worked for the fulfilment of this righteous ambition, can appreciate the remark that though an embodiment of Mr. Ranade's memory, the Economic Institute will be regarded by common consent as a standing tribute to the superior qualities of the head and heart of Mr. Gokhale himself. The relations between Mr. Ranade and Mr. Gokhale is a rare phenomenon; but rarer still is the example of such glorious succession as Mr. Gokhale has afforded by not only worthily wearing the mantle that fell on his shoulders by his Guru's death, but, even, if we may say so, improving it in certain respects, owing no doubt to the advantages he has had of

a public life untrammelled by the shackles of service. If in Mr. Ranade's own time it was perhaps necessary, as is sometimes alleged, for a great political and social reformer to profit by the extra height of the pedestal afforded by a high position in Government service, Mr. Gokhale has by his own example proved that such a necessity is no more. Emerson has said that no great soul in this world departs without communicating its secret to another. And viewed in any light, Mr. Gokhale has done in the Deccan more to perpetuate the noble traditions of his Guru than any other disciple of a Guru in any other part of India.

And now only one word would be enough as to the memorial which has been raised to perpetuate the memory of Mr. Ranade. The memorial is neither the usual painting nor bust—a thing which Mr. Ranade disliked most of all; it is an Industrial and Economic Institute—a thing which Mr. Ranade himself, if he were alive, would have liked and loved best of all. The Institute establishes a nucleus in Poona city of systematic constructive work of industrial research, with prospects limited only by financial resources. The expenditure already incurred on account of the building and that to be soon incurred on account of fitting, laboratory equipment, bureau library, &c., would leave out of the original collections a comparatively small sum for scholarships and for permanent establishment of full time workers in the Institute. Thanks to the public spirited munificence of Sir Gangadhar Rao of Miraj, an annual donation of the interest on Rs. 30,000 could be announced in Sir George Clarke's speech at the opening ceremony. And there is good reason to hope that his example may be imitated by others who may be blessed with the means of helping such an institution. The scheme of management of the institution is calculated to create confidence in its success and, therefore, the

view will be found in the paper on the Economic Results of the Public Works Policy. In this paper Mr. Joshi shows very clearly how the railway in India conjointly with the Free-Trade policy adopted and insisted on by the Home Government has played a large part in killing the various manufactures of the land. The paper on the Native Indian Army makes out a vigorous case for keeping up a *national* Indian army in the land,—national in composition, tone and character, manned mostly by Indians with a national reserve militia, incorporating armies, of Native States, and fully armed with the latest machinery; Mr. Joshi has also made out a good case for native Indian volunteer service. The whole question of Indian army is treated from a wide point of view, *viz.* the needs and possibilities of the British Empire. The note on Decentralization and the Reform Scheme embody in one compact form Mr. Joshi's practical scheme for enlarging the popular element in Indian administration. And when the popular element is being heard much better in Council in the *making* of law, Mr. Joshi's paper on the Jury system is bound to be of great interest, in as much as the trial by Jury is only a reflection of the popular voice in the work of *executing* the laws. Besides, when we are moving onwards in the work of Reform, the political significance of the Jury system in increasing the citizen's sense of responsibility, on which proper emphasis has been laid in the paper, cannot be also lost sight of.

More than half of the volume is taken up by papers on Agriculture and Economics. Two papers deal with an examination of the position of agriculture in Bombay and in India, in detail. The latter of these is written in 1890, and the one relating to Bombay in 1894. It would be most interesting to compare the relative position of agriculture in 1890 and 1910, after a lapse of twenty



years, and to note the advance or retardation during this period. So far as Bombay is concerned, Mr. Joshi's elaborate and dispassionate survey of 20 years from 1872-73 to 1892-93 convinced him that the general position as regards our agricultural industry was one of deterioration and depression—the 3·6 per cent increase in cropped area being more than balanced by a decline in intensive husbandry, by an increase of 13·4 p. c. in population, 39 p. c. in general revenue and 22 p. c. in land revenue, and 84 p. c. in foreign exports. In the other paper on Indian agriculture Mr. Joshi pointed out, on the basis of official figures, that the Indian ryot had left to him little motive and less encouragement for exertion and improvement, and is going down deeper as a predial slave. The reasons for such a state of things Mr. Joshi, after an elaborate analysis, stated to be (page 904).—“His tenure is uncertain, the leases varying from 30 years in Madras and Bombay to 5 years in Oudh and Punjab, his rents and assessments are so oppressively high as to leave him barely a margin for support—and hardly even that in Bengal and the Deccan; they are further liable to enhancement at the pleasure of the State and the private land-lord, concurrently with his diminishing ‘corn-heap’ and consequently dearer food grains; nor, further, are his private improvements left untaxed, if he makes any.” It would be a most valuable study to bring the figures upto 1910, when we have undergone two censuses and also other changes, and compare whitherward the position points—towards progress or depression. The long series of letters which Mr. Joshi wrote to the Bombay press on the land revenue questions in Bombay form an integral part of this study of the agricultural situation. Mr. Joshi's survey of Indian industries along with the lengthy review of the Sea-borne Trade of British India, is bound to possess immense interest at the present

time when India is passing through a new phase of Industrial activity; so too will the papers on Mining and Shipping present a number of suggestions for further work. The strong scheme for an Economical Council for India consisting of official and popular representatives to guide the economic policy of the Government of India which Mr. Joshi put forth in 1907, has greater force to-day when the Government is pushing forward with vigour its commerce and economic departments, than in 1907 when Lord Curzon just ushered them into existence on an organised basis. The paper on Prices and Prosperity naturally ought to attract wide attention just when we are on the threshold of an official report on the causes of the present high prices. Mr. Joshi held that foreign export, home-demand, national supply, and currency—all these four had to do with the rise and fall of prices, and his thesis will help the discussion of the question, to a large extent. The paper on Satara and its Industries ought to stand as a model for similar papers regarding other districts, and such an attempt is calculated to help the work of industrial survey of the presidency.

Education covers a pretty good number of pages in the volume of Mr. Joshi's Works. Mr. Joshi held that education ought to be as "widespread and general among the masses as possible", and that "universal education is the most powerful instrument for national emancipation and upheaval." But he seemed inclined to hold the view, in his paper on Education in Baroda written in 1893, that the time had not yet come for adopting the principle of statutory compulsion in India. In India, Mr. Joshi thought, there was a vast field for voluntary action and until its full limits were reached, a recourse to compulsory legislation had no adequate

justification. The question was mainly one of funds, and adequate facilities for diffused education had not been provided. In the case of girls compulsion could not be thought of, because of strong popular prejudices; while in the case of boys, said Mr. Joshi, compulsion was not needed, as there was a universal desire for male education. Mr. Joshi has referred to the evidence of Rajendra Lal Mitra before the Education Commission of 1882 in this respect. He also quoted Mr. Giles who said in 1882 that "If he had funds to open schools, he could add 60,000 scholars to the school attendance in a few months." On another occasion Mr. Joshi also referred to the testimonies of Director after Director of the Educational Department in Bombay, to the existence of a genuine and wide demand for education. He believed that as the farthest limit for voluntary action had not been reached, and the fullest facilities for education had not been provided in spite of a keen popular demand, a resort to compulsion by statute was, therefore, premature in India. But withal, he was the toughest fighter for "more schools," and he held that nothing would be too much that would carry education to the very doors of the people. With such a wide net-work of popular education at the basis, it would be most instructive to appreciate Mr. Joshi's scheme of co-ordinated higher education which he put forth in the papers on Commercial and Agricultural Education and the one on Indian Vernaculars in the Universities. Much interest will necessarily attach to the paper on commercial education at present when we are almost in sight of a college of commerce in Bombay. So also the paper on vernaculars in our Universities will afford valuable suggestions for a co-ordinated course of linguistic studies, at a time when the question of the reform of higher education is foremost in the day.

The volume of Hon. R. B. G. V. Joshi's Works now before us is bound to be of the greatest value to every student of Indian public questions. The subjects taken up for treatment are varied but at the same time most important to the Indian publicist. The figures and facts quoted throughout the whole book are invariably taken from published official records and other independent authoritative statistical works based on such records; and this fact lends to the volume special authority and weight. Mr. Joshi has his own political and economic principles, and works out his conclusions on their basis. His views may not be acceptable to all, but it will have to be admitted that they are all based on very strong data. His accurate and detailed study of public questions and his thorough grasp of them made him a standard authority on Indian politics. The long series of letters on Land Revenue in Bombay which Mr. Joshi wrote in the columns to the *Times of India*, led the Bombay Government to modify their policy. His speeches delivered in the Legislative Council during the short term that Mr. Joshi worked as a member, display the same broad stand-point of view and the same grasp that is met with in the writings. It was already being felt that Mr. Joshi was a power on the non-official side, and that his work for a few years more would have introduced into the Council a new spirit and a new tone. In his days Mr. Joshi had hardly any equal who could so effectively meet the officials on their own ground and corner them into positions of defence which reflected little ingenuity and less credit on them. He was anxious to be the true representative of the people in the fullest sense, and when he was given an opportunity for practical work by being elected to the Council, he went about through his constituency investigating grievances and questions in person.

His period of membership was short but even during this brief period, he left an enviable example to his junior colleagues in Council. The present volume, covering over 1256 pages is rather a bulky one, but those who knew Mr. Joshi personally, will regret that the vast mine of information, the living fountain of statistics—to use Mr. Nevins's words—has not been worked to yield still greater output than has been put forth in this volume. Inaccuracy of fact and figure was, in Mr. Joshi's case, almost an impossibility, and Hon. Mr. Gokhale who often had to drink from this "fountain" said in his speech on the occasion of the memorial meeting held at Poona in 1911, that one may rest assured of the accuracy of the facts and figures supplied by Mr. Joshi, and take them up without going into their verification. The present volume embodies, in part only, Mr. Joshi's labours for a quarter of a century, and the treatment of questions therein refers to a somewhat old date. But the high standard and lines of study are laid down ineffably, as a guide to fresh men and this excellent work must needs be further extended by bringing the data up-to-date, as from many points of view such an extension would be of great value. To Mr. Joshi's colleagues the volume will be a useful book of reference, and to fresh men taking to public life, it will also be a good and reliable guide and model. We have only to say that every one desirous of knowing and learning about Indian questions can do no better than plunge himself into the pages of this remarkable volume.

(25-3-1916)

## The Speeches of the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale

We thankfully acknowledge a copy of the Speeches of the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale, C. I. E., which the publishers of the book, Messrs. G. Natesan and Co. of Madras, have sent us.

The chief value of the book before us lies, in our opinion, in the fact that it brings together the utterances and pronouncements on some of the most important political topics of the generation by a publicist and a political agitator who is universally recognised in India as a careful student and a master of lucid exposition. Without entering on anything like a panegyric on Mr. Gokhale, we may say that few public men in India have won public appreciation as a speaker in a fuller measure than Mr. Gokhale. His speeches, apart from the ease and fluency which make it a pleasure to listen to them, are invariably characterised by an earnestness of purpose and an eloquence of logic which make a wonderfully effective combination for the purpose of conviction. Mr. Gokhale is always sparing in the use of quotations. He almost avoids epigram; there are no abnormal rises and falls in his sentiment; there is no attempt at oratorical brilliance; and wit and humour are quite foreign to him; you may hear or read his speeches for hours together without once dividing your lips for a smile. But his strength as a speaker lies in the direct and openly honest appeal to the superior sensibility of which his hearers may be capable. No traps of paradox are laid for the intellect in which, when once entrapped, it loves only to enjoy the sense of its own helplessness; no heroic attempts are made to overawe and hypnotise the hearer's mind by a display of oratorical fireworks to which his imagination can never aspire; or by the use of mysticism which his mind

cannot penetrate. But Mr. Gokhale speaks to you in the evident assurance of belief that you have the average share of sense and sensibility given to you, and claiming in his turn nothing more than a belief on the part of his audience in the possession by himself of an equal share of those qualities. Mr. Gokhale may have to make a small or a long speech ; a speech at a humble social function, a cricket match or a speech in the Supreme Legislative Council or before the pick of the members of the British Parliament ; you will find in either case the same earnestness of purpose, the same care at the choice of appropriate words, the same sense of proportion of parts to the whole, and the same methods of logical enunciation and proof, and of making points.

There is generally not one word in his speeches which is either redundant in sense or even repeated in delivery. The whole speech is *one* current, the flow of which is gentle though swift, and with every word of which the sense, and along with it the mind, is carried irresistibly forward toward the goal of proof and conviction. The preponderance of sense over oratory makes Mr. Gokhale's speeches as much enjoyable as reading matter as when you hear them actually delivered ; and for the same reason they bear also re-reading. The present collection will show that Mr. Gokhale could speak on any subject and enrich his speech with any number of facts and figures without making either suffer for the other. It is perhaps this gift of Mr. Gokhale which would have made him an ideal Parliamentarian if he was privileged enough to sit in the House of Commons. Speaking generally of the speeches we may say that they may be offered to any foreign critic of India as a fully representative sample of the bulk of thought and of the power of expression of which the best enlightened Indian publicists are capable. The book

ought to suffice as a silent reply to the malicious foreign critic who is inclined to depreciate Indians and is always prepared to do his worst to prevent them from realising the life of a self-governing nation. We congratulate the world of the students of Indian Politics as much as Messrs. 'Natesan and Co., upon the publication of the book before us.

(2-8-1912)

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### Mr. Nevinson on "The New Spirit in India"

"Whatever course our action may take, the *new spirit* has already breathed a fresh life into large classes of Indian peoples and it will continue to afford a high motive for self-devotion and for the moral courage and love of freedom in which the Indian character has hitherto been lacking. For India herself the present unrest holds out a promise of the highest possibilities, no matter how much she may suffer in realizing them."

Mr. H. W. Nevinson.

The real history of the human race, Mr. Buckle remarks, is a history not of *events* but of *tendencies*. History reveals a continuous process of development to which nations and Governments, laws and institutions, are subordinate and in which *events* only serve to sum up *tendencies*. It is usual to read history threadbare as a mere string of episodes and to ignore the front and background of environment. The true meaning of history is not to be sought in events conceived threadbare and isolated but in the *animating spirit*, which gives them their natural colour and significance. The advent of the British rule in India marks an era of *organic* change in our political environment and the whole current of our



history, has ever since begun to flow in a new channel. Fifty years of steady and orderly development has brought us in time with the world-forces in politics and British rule in India has proved a *fertilising medium* of civilisation and progress. Sir Henry Cotton's book on "New India or India in Transition" pictures to us the new forces which have emerged into action since the Mutiny, especially from the foundation of our Universities and the introduction of railways and telegraphs, down to the India of Lord Ripon. That covers pretty nearly a quarter of a century during which the main currents of national life exhibited in the social, economic, religious and political movements, sprang into vigorous life, and their cumulative action heightened the growing sense of a collective national life and a common political destiny in the various races and communities which inhabit this country. From "New India" to the "New Spirit in India" is but a natural and inevitable transition, covering another 25 years from 1884 to 1908. It only marks the period during which, the self-same forces came into rapid and vigorous play and made the whole country resonant with a new-born and immortal hope. Mr. H. W. Nevins, who came out to India in the winter of 1907 at a very opportune moment, has given a very life-like and realistic presentation of the whole movement in a style which is a marvel of simplicity and directness, in his attractive book on "The New Spirit in India." It is the only book which presents the *new* political aspirations of Young India with scrupulous impartiality. The Anglo-Indian and the Indian reader will find here an honest attempt at understanding the *true inwardness* of the nationalist movement in India, and a most sincere desire to make the "case" of the Extremist party well-understood of the people. Since the departure of Lord Curzon, there has come over our countrymen an

extraordinary change of *mental attitude* in scanning the true significance of political events and administrative measures, and we note with sincere gratification that we have in Mr. Nevinson a true and courageous exponent of the *new spirit*, which has animated the whole country and galvanized it into vigorous activity. His masterly analysis of the causes which have been steadily working towards this result, deserves the most careful attention.

"Many things have combined to create a new spirit and we have ourselves contributed much. The long peace that has made development possible, the easy communication by railways, the wide distribution of newspapers, the visits of highly educated Indians to England, the use of English as a common tongue among educated people of all races and religions, the increasing knowledge of our history and hard-won liberties, the increasing study of our great liberal thinkers—all these admirable advantages we have ourselves contributed to the new spirit and it is useless for startled reactionaries to think of withdrawing them now. We must also take into account the example set to all oriental nationalities by Japan, and the awakened stirring of Liberalism in England herself, and, no matter how feeble its efforts and how bitter its failure, in Russia, Egypt, Persia and Turkey. These are only broad general causes which have given shape and contour to the whole movement, but the more immediate and predisposing causes are to be sought in recent administrative measures which have shown a systematic and persistent disregard of Indian opinion and Indian feeling."

Mr. Nevinson is careful to note, however, that "Indians have, no doubt, exaggerated both the injustice and the malevolence: ..they have mistaken for malevolence what is only our reckless indifference to far-off responsibilities. But we cannot wonder at their mistakes."

From an analysis of the general and particular causes which have prepared the ground for and fostered the new spirit, we proceed to Mr. Nevinson's view of the true function of the Indian National Congress and the causes of its failure.

"I do not mean that the Congress has been useless. It served as a training ground for political knowledge. It afforded a centre for the growing unity of India, and without it the leaders of Indian reform could hardly have formulated their own programme. But in two avowed respects it has failed; it has had no influence upon the action of the Indian Government and no influence upon English opinion at home."

Now here is Mr. Nevinson's keen and just perception of the real situation more strikingly evident than in the luminous account he gives of the aims of the two contending political factions in this country. It is impossible to compress his clear and penetrating analysis in better words than his own.

The question immediately before India now is, which of two courses with regard to ourselves the new spirit as a whole will take. On the one hand, it may follow the line of most resistance. It may proclaim throughout the whole country —

"It is useless to trouble about any reforms that these intruding foreigners will give us. Let them go on their way with their Advisory Councils, their Notables, their extended Legislative Councils, and other deccits. They have never paid the smallest attention to our real demands. In Mill's words, they keep us as a warren or preserve for their own use, a place to make money in a human form to be worked for their own profit. It is for us to pursue our own course, disregarding their presence. Beyond paying their taxes, we need have little concern with them. If

they imprison us, we will go to gaol silently; if they deport us without trial, we will endure without protest; if they execute us, we know that our souls will be at once re-incarnated to continue the struggle. But we will not notice their Government either by sharing in it, or denouncing it. In religion, in education, in industries and common life, we will follow our own national lines just as though no foreigners were pretending to rule us. If enough of us combine, we shall embarrass their position; perhaps we shall make it untenable as well as ridiculous. But whether it is untenable or not, we do not greatly care, till a common Indian nationality has the strength to take freedom into its own hands."

That puts the "Case for the Nationalist party fairly and clearly, omitting nothing, exaggerating nothing." Then comes the other side of the picture.

"But besides this tempting line of most resistance there is another way, and considering the external dangers that threaten India, and her own existing difficulties of race, religion, and inexperience this other way is probably the way of wisdom. The new spirit may still endeavour to act in harmony with us, for the common good. Acquiescing in our presence as on the whole tending to justice and advancement, acknowledging the material advantages we have brought, but at the same time persistently pressing for extensions of liberty, taking every opportunity that offers and never hesitating to grasp at any chance of progress *because it falls short of the perfect ideal*."

Perhaps the most amusing chapter in the whole book is the story of *Maratha shor* and nowhere is Mr. Nevinson, as a journalist, at his best, than in his acute perception of the dramatic and picturesque elements, of the scene of the Congress fiasco in the hundred subtle little touches of minute detail, that are shaded in with so light a hand that

you scarcely notice them in the mild good humour that runs through them all, in the lavish use he has made of word painting and graphic expressions, with which he has enlivened the whole picture. It is too much for words to convey the reality of the whole scene and no words can do it better than Mr. Nevinson's.

"The whole air was full of suspicion. The mere choice of Surat for the Congress after Nagpur was abandoned: how suspicious that was! Surat, too close a neighbour to Bombay, the very stronghold of Bombay Moderates, Parsis men Parliamentarians, unredeemed by the fire of sacrifice, *men who would make the best of both worlds*, men who took titles from an alien Government! It was in Surat, that Sir Pherozshah had founded his fortunes. Now he dominated all the west coast, all the Presidency of Bombay, and here he was seen with Mr. Dinshaw Edulji Wacha, most statistical of Parsis, himself President of the Calcutta Congress in 1901. All the other obedient satellites were circling round him too, bent on conciliating a Government that answered conciliation with titles or contempt."

There is a fine and faithful summary of Mr. Malvi's memorable speech.

"Mr. Tribhovandas Malvi, Chairman of the Reception Committee, rose to welcome the Congress in the name of his native Surat, and there was silence. He told the history of Surat and passed on to the history of the Congress. People do not want to hear history when they are making it. Moghuls, Marathas, French factories that stood on the very ground where now the Pandal stood, what did all that matter? King Shivaji,—he was dead. The early efforts of the Congress, the failures, the successes,—all were dead. But the present moment was alive and big with futurity. *For heaven's sake*

*come to the present moment!* So the assembly waited, impatient, but in silence, save that at the word moderation a breath of murmur stirred. The address ended." There is another pen-picture:—

"Uproar drowned the rest. With folded arms Mr. Tilak faced the audience. On either side of him, young Moderates sprang to their feet, wildly jesticulating vengeance. Shaking their fists and yelling to the air, they clamoured to hurl him down the steep of the platform... But Mr. Tilak asked for no protection. He stood there with folded arms, defiant, calling on violence to do its worst, calling on violence to move him, for he would move for nothing else in hell or heaven. In front the white clad audience roared like a tumultuous sea. Suddenly something flew throught the air—a shoe!—a Mahratta shoe!—a reddish leather, pointed shoe, sole studded with lead. It struck Surendranath Banerjee on the cheek; it cannoned off upon Sir P. M. Metha. It flew, it fell, and as at a given signal, white waves of turbaned men surged up the escarpment of the platform. Leaping, climbing, hissing the breath of fury, brandishing long sticks, they came, striking at any head that looked to them Moderate, and in another moment, between brown legs standing upon the green-baize table, caught glimpses of the Indian National Congress dissolve in chaos."

This is indeed a spirited picture. While the consequences of that dramatic episode may be variously estimated, there can be no gainsaying the fact that rightly or wrongly its moral effect upon the whole country has been deep and immense. It has awakened the whole country as by a *thunder clap* to a true sense of the sudden change of *mental attitude* that has come over the whole country.

Mr. Tilak's attitude in the whole affair may be variously estimated by friends and foes from a party point of

view, but to the non-party observer Mr. Tilak will appear as the one great force, which has breathed new life into the dry bones rotting in the valley of death. His personal and political influence has greatly helped to promote a *healthy opposition*, viewing public events in a truly critical frame of mind, solely intent on keeping up the languishing interest of the masses and classes to its true measure of healthy interest in the political progress of the country.

(6 12-1908)

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## Fierce Tirade against the War

### *Tolstoy, the Apostle of Peace*

*Every one knows and cannot help knowing that above all wars calling forth the lowest animal passions deprive and brutalize men.*

TOLSTOY.

It is yet fresh in the memory of many of us that when the Boer war first broke out Mr. William Stead, the editor of the "Review of Reviews," began to carry on a persistent and unwearied agitation against the South African war. How he flooded the country with pamphlets and booklets fiercely denouncing the war, how he founded 'Stop the War Committees' and did all in his power to expose the machinations of the war party, are all matters of common knowledge. Mr. Stead for all his pains, however, only succeeded in making himself the object of popular hatred and his meetings were mobbed. The Hague Peace Conference was then just over and Mr. Stead who was greatly instrumental in making that conference a success could not but act as he did when the English nation was bent on making relentless war on two small and unoffending South African Republics. What Mr. Stead did at the time

of the outbreak of the South African hostilities, Count Leo Tolstoy, the aged novelist, and humanitarian philosopher of Russia, is now doing to denounce the hostilities which have broken out between Russia and Japan. But the strangest part of the affair so far is that English people who ridiculed, mobbed and denounced Mr. Stead as a pro-Boer and a traitor are now doing their utmost to bolster up Count Tolstoy's fierce tirades against the present war. If Mr. Stead was a pro-Boer and in the opinion of many patriotic Englishmen deserved only to be hanged, drawn and quartered, Count Leo Tolstoy may appear to the common Russian as a pro-Japanese who being openly hostile to his Emperor and his fatherland, deserves no better treatment than what is the traitor's due. But the very Englishmen who had nothing but scorn and ridicule for Mr. Stead's humanitarian appeals are opening their columns to Count Tolstoy's fearless sermon against the war and Anglo-Indian journals following suit are issuing supplements containing the Count's twelve chapter exposition of the philosophy of war.

One of the two contending parties in the present war professes Christianity, the religion which is called the religion of love, the other professes Buddhism, the religion of piety and serene calm. Both the nations going to war are invoking the blessings of their gods and saints forgetful all the while, that the work of destruction and the slaughtering of innocent men is hateful alike to the Christian and the Buddhistic saints and prophets. No religion, if we except the religion of the prophet of Arabia, looks on with complacent acquiescence on the horrors and brutalities which are perpetrated on the field of battle. But when nations go to war they do so in the name of their country and their religion and to infuse a maddening spirit of patriotic fervour into the hearts of the ignorant rank and file of



their armies, they hold aloft abstract ideals in the name of which they call upon their hired mercenaries to fight and die. It is really a curious commentary on the hold which Christian teachings have on the minds of men professing the Christian faith that they should invoke the blessings of saints and martyrs of their faith on the murderous designs on which they are intent. It is the essence of diplomacy and generally of state-craft that it should be able to conceal the reality of things under the borrowed garb of specious and plausible theories. To deprive the hideous spectre of war of many of its brutalizing and iniquitous tendencies all the falsehoods of the fatherland being in danger, of the dignity of the dearly loved Monarch being on the point of meeting with grievous insult and the prestige of the nation being at stake, are sedulously invented, emphasized and circulated in order to throw dust into the eyes of the credulous and half-hearted populace whose anger is finally roused into white heat by the propagation of such systematic lies and platitudes. The very ministers whose duty is to preach every Sunday a sermon of peace, piety and general good will to men, become the militant exponents of an aggressive national policy and churches and chapels resound with the noise of the call to arms. Thus Christians forget and ignore for the nonce all the most cherished and sacred teachings of Christ, Buddhists find it convenient to deprecate the divine prohibition of Lord Buddha against killing of any kind and both degenerate into savages of the primitive type bent upon killing or being killed and desirous of sucking the very life-blood of that portion of humanity which they foolishly believe to be their enemies.

We have only tried to summarise what Count Leo Tolstoy in much stronger and fiercer language has said of his own people. We have it on his authority that the Russian nation in the present instance and for the matter

of that almost every nation on the eve of a declaration of war, is conscious of the criminality of the work which is to be done, but wants somehow to lay the flattering unction to its soul that it is going to vindicate the cause of justice, peace and humanity. But not only are European generals and diplomats misguiding the people but even professors, scholars, and theologians think it their duty to demonstrate that the war is in no way contradictory to the objects of the Hague Peace Conference. Under such circumstances thought and speech are used not for the purpose of guiding human activity into right channels but for justifying any activity, however criminal it may be. Count Leo Tolstoy is hard not only on his own Government but on all countries which go to war for purposes of territorial aggrandisement. Even the Boer war does not escape from his ferule. And if what Tolstoy says of the Russo-Japanese war is true of the Boer war also, it follows as a corollary that all his reasoning is applicable to the Tibet expedition also though its real character is veiled under the sanctimonious name and style of a peace mission. We do not know what treatment Tolstoy or his fierce denunciation of the war is receiving in Russia. Perhaps he is looked upon by the majority of military men and patriotic enthusiasts as a raving madman whose vituperations are not to be taken seriously. But it is certainly a little gratifying to find that even in what is called backward and despotic Russia there should be a fearless thinker and writer of Tolstoy's type, who regardless of consequences is unburdening his soul of the weighty and very momentous sentiments which are engendered in his mind at the sight of such national guilt and national criminality.

In official language, however, Russia denies that she had any designs of going to war. It was Japan that struck the first blow and it was only when it was impossible any

longer to continue in a Pacific foreign policy that Russia sounded her call to arms. Technically this may be quite true. But if we go behind the formality of diplomatic language does it at all seem possible that this specious contention will for a moment hold water? Japan may have struck the first blow but what led to that blow being struck at all? Certainly Japan is removed by a good many thousands of miles from the proper frontiers of the Russian Empire. How came Russia at all to touch the fringes of the Pacific Ocean? Manchuria and Korea were certainly not the possessions of Russia from times immemorial. If Japan had invaded Russian frontiers and poured an army into Russian territory all these wild cries of the fatherland being in danger and Russian prestige being at stake would carry some meaning to the minds of rational people. The fact of the matter, however, is that Russia silently encroached on Chinese territory and China not being equipped with the murderous weapons of modern manufacture had quietly to give way before the ever-advancing mighty strides of the Polar bear. Had the Chinese been as well trained in the art of scientific warfare as the Japanese of the present day, Russia would have had to fight a yellow enemy not in the beginning of the twentieth century but some ten years before the close of the nineteenth. The Chinese army being an ill-equipped rabble of undisciplined troops could be hammered without Russia's incurring the least risk. Thousands were mercilessly butchered and drowned in the flowing torrents of the Amur. By such iniquitous and barbarous methods Russia acquired an unquestioned supremacy over Manchuria. The other European powers, far removed as they were from the scene of activity, could not effectively put a check on Russia's ever increasing and ever expanding dominions. By the same wily methods of strategy and occasional resort to arms

Russia was trying to annex the kingdom of Korea. But the presence of the Russians in Korea would have been a standing menace to the very national and independent existence of the Japanese Empire and it was only in answer to the natural dictates of the instinct for self-preservation that Japan had finally to draw the sword and throw away the shield. So if at all in questions of international diplomacy any adjudication between right and wrong is feasible and admissible, the consciousness of being the aggrieved party rests wholly with the Japanese.

According to Tolstoy war may be a cruel and murderous process. But for purposes of self-preservation it may be sometimes justifiable. If European nations relying on the superiority of numbers or superiority of weapons lay waste whole continents which are afterwards to serve as fresh fields and pastures new for their superfluous and starving population, we certainly may look on with a little indulgence at Japan going to war in order to preserve its national existence and independence. It is only the unjustness of the Russian contentions which has led Tolstoy to launch forward his fierce denunciation of the war which is carried on by Russian Imperialists. Even the Russian peasants who are at a moment's notice impressed into compulsory military service are loth to partake in a war which has on it the curse of sin, avariciousness and unrighteousness. Many reservists who were ordered to the front in their conversations with Tolstoy admitted that they had not their heart in the matter. The common Russian peasant is not likely to know the merits of the quarrel and he does not care a whit for what is passing some five thousand miles away from his little homestead. If Russia were threatened with a foreign invasion every Russian would feel the necessity of joining his country's forces to defend his hearth and

home. But for the life of him he does not understand what his Government has to fight for in distant climes and on distant shores. So the heart of the Russian soldier not being in the matter he does not fight for all he is worth and in spite of his superior physique and up-to-date military equipment goes down before the irresistible onslaught of the sturdy Japanese who know that right is on their side. Every Japanese soldier knows that were he not to fight and win, Russia would in the course of the next few years be knocking at the very gates of Tokio and to protect himself from this grave danger, he puts his whole heart in the fighting he has to do. It is mainly to this consciousness of being in the right and being the aggrieved party that has enabled the Japanese to score an uninterrupted series of brilliant military victories against enormous odds. So even if we grant all the truth of Count Tolstoy's indignant condemnation of war in general we cannot help thinking that the Japanese are less to blame than the Russians in this slaughter of innocent men. The Count's countrymen, the Russians, are fighting in a wrong cause and the sooner they take to heart his sage and dispassionate advice, the better able they will be to perceive the criminality and injustice of their long continued foreign policy of preying on helpless and innocent Asiatic people. Misdeeds and malpractices may go unpunished for some days but finally retribution is sure to fall down swiftly and unerringly on the miscreants. The wails of the helpless Chinese drowned mercilessly in the Amur did not rend the skies and ascend to heaven in vain. The Japanese in their continuous run of victories over the Russian troops are in a way avenging the cruel barbarities which brutal Russian military officers perpetrated on the innocent Chinese though unfortunately those dead victims of such barbarities know it not.

## The Blessings of War

A few months ago a Simla telegram announced that Col. Barrow gave a lecture before the United Service Institution on the subject of "the Blessings of War." The report further said, as indeed might have been expected, that the lecturer combated the idea of the anti-militarists that war is barbarous, injurious to trade and commerce, that it costs money, takes men away from other employments and causes waste of life. On the contrary he exemplified the peace and progress which war had brought about in South Africa, India and Burma. And he even went so far as to describe War as a "divine institution." Now, a Son of Mars could not indeed be expected to hold any other views than those expressed above on the subject of War. But to exonerate the Simla Colonel from the charge of blood-thirstiness on the ground of war being his pet profession, nay a matter of duty to which he swore when he made a choice of his profession, is something different from a deliberate judgment expressing entire agreement with him on the merits of the institution itself of War. The rules of the grammar of assent must obviously be different in the two cases. The question really is not whether it is natural for a military colonel to say what he has said in defence of War, but whether War really is and is not what the lecturer has said it is and is not from the standpoint of ethics.

Now even when a champion of War may claim that War is a blessing, he cannot put it higher than that it is a 'blessing in disguise.' For, even admitting that War is inevitable and conduces to the good of the world and humanity in the long run, we cannot imagine any one admiring or appreciating the superficial aspect—the disguise itself which War assumes.

It is possible, as in the case of a surgical operation, that the amputation of a limb of the body must be regarded as beneficial under certain circumstances and that the gruesome act of the cutting of vital parts may certainly be consistent with the deeply tender nature of the mind and a highly ethical character of the heart of the surgeon. But even here human sensations would not allow you to call the amputation anything but an unpleasant—nay fearful—act. Could not War afford to assume a less terrible disguise? Perhaps not. In that case we may at any rate be allowed to characterise its exoteric aspect in plain language and call it hellish. The blessing-in-disguise theory may be all right. But even assuming that, are we not entitled to demand, why should it not be possible for Omnipotence to choose little less hideous forms for its dispensations? Evil may have a place assigned to it in the moral governance of the world. But we are not inclined to budge an inch from our idealistic position that there should be nothing to prevent moral government being administered only through pleasant means. Realism is only a theory, it is a justification of imperfection. But we raise the preliminary point—why should there be imperfection in the world at all? Where is the logical necessity of the limitation of powers, which are anthropomorphically attributed to Omnipotence? But Omnipotence and the limitation of powers, on which the theory of Realism is only a profitless gloss, is contradiction in terms. For human man it may not be possible to achieve everything with the help of honey and rose water. But why, indeed why should it be impossible for Omnipotence? It may perhaps be contended that what we call evil may be really good, as what we call pain may be pleasure. We have no logical objection to the suggested possibility of the inversion of the phenomena of pleasure and pain, and good and

evil. But even such inversion could not give help; for the existence of the entity of evil cannot be done away with by such inversion.

To return to the subject of War, the question is as alive as ever—Is not War really terrible and painful? If so, why should divine Providence choose such an objectionable form for at least one of his blessings, if War is a blessing as the Simla Colonel says? What we mean is, that if some men must wage wars and others must defend them, then let them at least defend them as inevitable evils, and not glorify them into divine blessings. That bloody wars are a necessary preliminary to progress, as Colonel Barrow said it was in the case of South Africa, Burma and India, is hardly much removed from the vulgar superstition that living children must be entombed in the foundations if the bridges supported by them may endure. But there is also one more objection to the divine-blessing theory of War. War may be a divine blessing but can we be always sure that it is so in every case? For as God seems to like administering his dispensations through the human agency in this world, would it not be pertinent to inquire whether the dispensations do not ever take the colour of their medium? Is there absolutely no free will allowed to man? If so, could it never happen that his self got mixed up with the divine dispensations administered through him? And made a mess of the whole thing? Is there no such thing as an unjust war? If so, who will decide what wars are just and what unjust? The motives for war may as often be base and selfish as high and noble. Who should decide in the given case of a war, as to how much real righteous indignation, or how much the lust of power and the intoxication of military strength was at the bottom of it all? Statisticians tell us that "fifteen thousand millions of people were sacrificed by wars in the world



upto the present time. The total population of the world in the beginning of the 19th century is calculated at 650 millions. Calculating three generations to every century, the total death rate on account of the ravages of war would be equal to the entire population of the world for seven hundred years." Now who can say that the death of every single individual among the 15,000 millions killed in war was in the nature of a divine blessing?

Busch, in his life of Bismarck, reports the iron Chancellor as saying in a gloomy moment "There is no doubt that I have caused unhappiness to great numbers. But for me three great wars would not have taken place, 80,000 men would not have been killed, and would not be mourned by parents, brothers, sisters, widows and sweet-hearts. I have settled that with God, but I have had little, if any, pleasure from all I have done." Disowning all pleasure from war is a bid for claiming credit for a high sense of duty in the present case. But those who know all about the Elms telegram will testify to the fact that though Bismarck did not enter upon the Franco-Prussian War with a light heart, yet he rather provoked the war than accepted it with righteous passivity. We may take another instance. The reign of Queen Victoria is usually described as a reign of peace. But how many of those who pass that opinion advert to the fact that "so far from being a record reign of peace, the sixty-four years of Queen Victoria's reign was", as remarked by Mr. G. H. Perris, "early by the Crimean Campaign and the Indian Mutiny, and witnessed some forty imperial wars or expeditions in which China was opened to the opium traffic, and Sikhs, Burmese, Afgans, Chitralis, Egyptians, Soudanese, Abyssinians, Kaffirs, Zulus, Basutoes, Matabeles, Mashovas, Bechuannas, Nilgerians and Maoris were taught the superior merit of explosives?" The Queen,

says the same writer, died amid painful echoes from the South African battle-fields, crying on her death-bed "Oh! that peace may come!" Queen Victoria must have been singularly insensible to the blessings of War, as described by Col. Barrow, if she really cried on her death-bed that peace may come. Now, we might pertinently inquire whether every one of these wars and campaigns, during the forty eventful years of Queen Victoria's reign, was politically inevitable and ethically justifiable. It appears, therefore, unsafe to put war on the high ground of a divine blessing. We can understand a soldier, once he has chosen his profession and taken the vow of fidelity to his employer, fighting like an automaton. He is not to reason why; he is but to fight, and if God chooses it so, die. The first quality in a soldier is obedience and discipline; bravery comes only next. The cause of a war, howsoever unjust, never taints the soldier. But we believe a soldier leaves his element when he begins to investigate into the Ethics of War, and overdoes his part when he calls War a divine blessing. (13-10-1912)

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### A Few Last Words about the Boers

#### I

Now that the South African War is over and the Boer and the Briton have agreed to live together in mutual toleration and political companionship, if not in love, it would be interesting to turn back for a moment in a mood of retrospection and to reflect upon the conditions which enabled the Boers to make the admirable fight they did against a first class European Power. It is not our set purpose to praise the Boer at the cost of the Briton; but we can-

not help saying that by their recent display of certain qualities, the Boers have added one more item to the world's treasury of human wonders. The disparity of strength between the contending parties was so great that the task of contest would well-nigh appear to any one to be hopeless. But it is only under such conditions that the element of heroism in human nature flashes forth; and howsoever *opinions might differ as to the absolute justice of the cause* for which apparently the fierce war has been waged, no one can doubt that the fight made by the Boers will rank with the best that was ever made in the history of the world; and even the modified success which crowned the *supreme efforts of the Boers will always convey its* own lesson of instruction to those that may need it in any part of the wide world hereafter.

But what are those qualities which enabled the Boers to make such a wonderful stand against such heavy odds? In this connection it will be remembered that we in India were completely at a disadvantage in learning all that is necessary to learn for answering the above question. No doubt the results of numerous battles could indicate the fighting qualities of the Boers, but it is not as a mere soldier in the field that the Boer becomes an interesting specimen for study. There are things behind the scene of battle, things in the dim back-ground which were never sufficiently brought to light even in the reports of enterprising and inquisitive war correspondents on the British side, and in which is centred the material for the penetrating mind that may be intent upon going to the root of the conditions which made the Boer war the kind of object lesson it has actually been. The information of the people in India about the Boers was not only second or third hand, but it was on the whole *unreliable as being filtered* through the censor's sieve or transmitted through a des-

torting medium of prejudice. We have heard much about the Boer, but our informants had for the most part gathered their knowledge at the distance of the gun-shot range and invariably from the British point of view of the battlefield, of the farm-house and of the veldt. Our readers, therefore, will, we suppose, find it interesting to learn something about the Boers from a stranger who had no interest in the war except that of a curious onlooker and who enjoyed the rare privilege of being with the Boers though not fighting on their side. Some time ago, Mr. H. C. Hillegas, correspondent of the *New York World*, America, published a book under the title "With the Boer Forces." And some of the facts related by him therein will bear to be pointedly retold even at the present day.

Though the Boers chose their own time to begin the war, still in every other respect they were at a disadvantage. For as soon as the war was declared the Boer Republics were effectively cut off from the civilised world, and the only door for exit which they had at the Delagoa Bay was blockaded by the British warships. The Boers had thus to rely on such supplies as in their prudence they had stored up before the breaking out of the hostilities. The Boers were, however, extremely self-reliant. As if by a touch of magic the whole nation was turned into a military camp; and the bustle of the Boer life was transferred from the city and town to the veldt. After the first commands had departed the city streets were deserted and only women and children gathered at the Bulletin boards to learn the fate of the Burgher armies. Houses and cottages were deserted and the halls and the Government buildings resounded only with the tread of those who were not old or strong enough to bear arms. The whole adult Boer population was moving, and those that remained in town or village had to breathe a sort of funeral atmos-

phere. It is remarkable how a nation of farmers should thus be converted at a moment's notice into a huge camp of fightful soldiers. Lion-hunting is the most favourite sport of the Boer; and he had apparently no difficulty in transferring to the task of a fight with the British lion all the sportsmanly enthusiasm with which he light-heartedly treaded the forest in quest of the noble beast. After the negotiation for establishing a better understanding with the British had failed, the Boer farmers swore to hunt out the British lion and to shed his last drop of blood in defence of his country. The Boer farmer-soldier took the field as a patriot and not as a mercenary automaton like the British soldier.

The British soldier was not concerned with the righteousness or unrighteousness of the war. But on the other hand, the Boer soldier took his inspiration to fight not by the order of a military commander but by his own love to his own country; and it was his intense faith in the righteousness of his cause and not the pay or the bounty that sustained him in his arduous and self-imposed duties. It was because of these things that the mobilisation of the Boer army was effected in no time. Only a few minutes after the declaration of war had reached his ear was the Boer soldier ready to start for the frontier. He wanted time only to saddle his horse, to swing over his shoulder the bandolier filled with new cartridges, and to put a Bible into his coat-pocket. The Boer when once he left his home became an army unto himself. He knew his rendezvous by instinct; and when a number of these armed farmers had collected together and the company was thought to be sufficient, a commando was organised which formed the fighting unit of the Boer army. An utter want of uniformity of dress and discipline gave the commando an appearance more of a

pleasure party than of a fighting column. While the commando was marching, any one was at liberty to indulge in an *impromptu* horse race or to go after game, sportsman-fashion. Among the commando perfect good fellowship prevailed and drunken brawls never took place. "Little discomforts which would cause an American or European soldier to use volumes of profanity were passed by without notice or comment by these psalmsinging Boers. An angry man was as rarely seen as one who cursed, and more rare than either was an intoxicated one. The Boer army fought with guns and gunpowder, but it had no discipline, no drills, no form, no standards and not even a roll-call. It was only a massive aggregation of lion-hunters."

(5-6-1902)

## II

The Boer is deeply attached to his family; and the proof of his indifference to fight as anything but sport comes from the fact that he takes with him to the theatre of war all his sons who are strong enough to carry rifles. Mr. Hillegas mentions several instances of mere Boer boys, even of eleven years, coming into evidence as fighters. The boy followed his father everywhere, whether into battle or to the spring of water; and "when my father is injured or killed I will take his rifle" was the boy's excuse for being away from home. These boys were often in the thickest of the battle, and shewed as much wisdom as valour throughout the campaign. "During one of the lulls in the fighting at Magersfontein a burgher of fifteen years crept up to within twenty yards of three British soldiers and shouted 'hands up.' Thinking that there were other Boers in the vicinity the men dropped their guns and became prisoners of the boy who took them to General Delarey's tent. When the General asked the boy how he

secured the prisoners he replied non-chalantly "—Oh, I surrounded them." In 1881 Boer boys under fifteen years formed one whole regiment, known as the Penkop Regiment. But it is not only Boer boys that fight for their country. In the present War hundreds of old men past the age of seventy, took the field. Grey-haired men who in another country might be expected to be found at their homes, reading the accounts of the deeds of their grandsons, went out on scouting duty and scaled hills with almost as much alacrity as the burghers only half their age. No doubt every burgher is bound by the Boer laws of conscription to serve his country in times of war. But surely no conscription can operate upon men past their three score and ten. The Boers, however, needed no conscription laws to enforce military service upon them. They were too warlike and patriotic to remain at home on any account while their country was in danger, and men of all manner of trades and professions, lawyers and physicians, photographers and grocers, speculators and sextons, judges and school masters, school boys and bar-keepers, all locked their desks and offices and journeyed to the front. Even clergymen joined the commandos and did the praying for those who fought. But the Boer farmers and agriculturists, the so-called Takhaars, were so ardent for fight that they went to the frontiers days before the ultimatum was sent. That explains how the fighting on the Boer side began almost the next day after the declaration of the war.

But the part played by the Boer women was even more admirable. The Boer housewife, who is the ornament of the household in times of peace, proved the source of warlike inspiration in the time of war. The Boer women had served their apprenticeship of fighting in the Zulu War. Their patriotism always made them take an active interest in politics, and they were prepared for hosti-

lities in the present war even before the men. For even sooner than the men the Boer women realised that peace must be broken sometime in order to secure real tranquility in the country; and "she, who lived on the veldt and was patriotic, was anxious to have the storm come and pass as quickly as possible." It cannot be supposed that the Boer women did not know that war meant bloodshed and the death of many of those whom they loved. "But all those selfish considerations were left aside when they believed that the life of their country was at stake." Immediately before the breaking out of war, the Boer women were busily engaged in preparing clothing, knapsack and breadbags for their male relatives; and during the war they made up the deficiencies of the Government arrangements by serving as self-constituted but excellent and effective commissary agents. They served refreshments to the burghers at railway stations and assisted in preparing the commissary stores. In the hospitals at the bases, their work was invaluable, and they were to be seen engaged as ministering angels even in the laagers. The perils of the war and the distress of the war time only impelled them to take up their favourite work of charity, and in distributing its fruit they made no distinction between friend and foe. When the tide of war changed and the flight of the Boers to their strongholds in the hills began, the Boer farm houses in the country became typical lunch stations, where the women entertained hundreds of burghers every day without taking any remuneration for the same.

But even more important was the work which the Boer women did in the nature of encouraging their male relations to go with the fight for the national independence. They urged their husbands and sons to abbreviate their leaves of absence and return to their commandos. When the burghers returned to their houses on furloughs of from



five days to two weeks, the wives urged their immediate return and in many instances insisted that they should re-join their commandos forthwith upon pain of receiving no food if they remained at home ! The Boer women despised a coward or a man who seemed to be shrinking from his duty to his country. But their spirit went beyond this at times. They would have formed volunteer commandos if rules had not forbidden the same, and even in spite of the rules scores of Boer women enjoyed the illegal but patriotic satisfaction of taking active part in battles. Some of the Boer generals took their wives with them during the operations, and when battles raged hot and heavy and the women could not be transferred to places of safety they were quietly given rifles and bandoliers. Among the Boer prisoners of war at Colesbrough were three Boer women who wore men's clothing but it was not until after they had been confined in the prison-ship at Capetown that their sex was discovered. On the first of May 1900, a thousand Boer women assembled in the Government buildings at Pretoria and adopted a memorial in which words of encouragement were addressed to the fighting Boers, and the women throughout the Transvaal were called upon to take up arms to be used in the cause of defence as well as active warfare. At the outset of the war a women's shooting club was organised, and some of the members had already attained superior excellence in marksmanship.

It is no wonder that a race so thoroughly imbued with patriotism and so brave and self-sacrificing, should attract the active sympathy of foreigners. And though among those foreigners that poured into the Boer country when the war was declared, there were some who were mere mercenaries or soldiers of fortune, there were others who liked the fighting for its own sake or were inspired with

the pure motive of rendering their mite of help to a righteous cause enveloped in the shadows of superior adverse might. Most of the foreigners who were in the land when the war was declared naturally sided with the Boers and within a short time afterwards many more came from Europe and America. It may be said that a good cause and a patriotic people will always successfully touch the hearts of even a third person; and the Boers had the satisfaction of having almost every foreign nationality represented on their side in their fight against British tyranny.

But the sympathies of strangers can never be roused by saving your own skins; and if for the sake of their independence the Boers had not been prepared to sacrifice every other precious possession they had in this world, they would never have touched the heartstrings of the whole human world even as they have been able to do. The Boers themselves were quite conscious of having inspired feelings of admiration and sympathy in the hearts of the continental nations of Europe. But their calculation about the exact degree of the intensity of these feelings in the heart of the German Emperor proved inaccurate, and the mass of sympathy went for nothing as does a charge of gun-powder for want of a spark. The Boers have no doubt succumbed to the overwhelming combination of adverse elements; but the world has said and will say forever, that they have given a good account of themselves as self-respecting and manly men, and that even in their failure they have vindicated the element of justice, which they claimed for their cause.

(15-6-1902)

### III

#### *An Historical Parallel*

"The guerilla war which followed during the seventeen years after the death of Sambhaji, Shivaji's successor, has scarcely a parallel in history." This observation was made by Sir William Hunter fifteen years ago. If that appreciative student of Indian history were writing on the topic last or this year, he would have certainly modified his observation by saying that the parallel was so late in coming as the year 1900-1901, though even then the parallel has been incomplete in many important respects. The guerilla war waged by the Mahrattas during the years 1690-1707 was waged under as heavy odds as the guerilla war by the Boers of South Africa during 1900-1902. But while the former ended in the annihilation of the imperial army of Aurangzeb, the latter could not have any appreciable effect beyond that of keeping the British army of 2½ lakhs successfully at bay and harrassing it at times for nearly two years. This difference between the results of the two guerilla wars separated by two centuries is, however, to be accounted for only by reference to the surrounding circumstances. For, as for the personal qualities of bravery, military genius, patriotism and religious fervour, the Boers have equalled the Mahrattas. Notwithstanding the obvious points of difference, therefore, the historical parallel becomes interesting to even a casual thinker over history; and hence we should like to conclude our few last words about the Boers by dwelling a little on the points of similarity between the two most memorable guerilla wars that will be handed down to posterity.

What strikes one as most remarkable on a contemplation of the two wars is the great use which can be made of the peculiar kind of warfare known as the guerilla. It is a weapon with the aid of which desperation strikes with double the force of hope, and one fighting man goes as far as ten. The sense of having nothing to lose but everything to gain lightens the heart, and the recklessness of irresponsible fighters often becomes more splendidly successful than the most organised attack delivered by a well-trained column of a regular army. How the Boers were carrying on this warfare for the last two years is now too well known. We shall, therefore, notice only a few things about their counterpart, the Mahrattas.

When about the year 1688 Aurangzeb marched with an army of 3 lakhs towards the Deccan, the prospect was certainly more hopeless to the Mahrattas than it was to the Boers when they sent an ultimatum to the British Government. The Boers took the offensive and invaded the British dominions, and for some time in the beginning the British army was on the defensive and suffered terrible reverses in the few attempts at offensive measures. On the other hand the Mahomedan army from the beginning swept everything before it. "All the plain country was over-run and the hill forts were taken one after another without struggle." The parallel is reached when after their first victories the British soldiers crossed the Modder and the Tugela and Pretoria was taken. The guerilla fight of the Boers commenced at this point. In the case of the Boers as well as the Mahrattas the real patriot soldiers began to shine forth only when the country's fortune was at its lowest ebb; and the Boer farmer soldiers, Dewet, Delarey, Botha, Vilejon remind us of some of the Mahratta farmer soldiers, viz. Santaji, Dhanaji, Ramchandra Pant Amatya, Khanderao Dabhade.

Sidoji Nimbalkar, Parsoji Bhosale and others. The Boers had no more resources to fall back upon than the Mahrattas; and on the other hand, just as Aurangzeb had the resources of the whole Hindustan at his command, so the British army in the South African field had the backing of the entire British Empire. In fact both the Boers and Mahrattas had to fight without funds and without a commissariat. For a time both carried on the war also without a political leader. The war was pressed so home against the circumscribed Boers that President Kruger had to escape to Europe, just as Rajaram abandoned his wife and his friends to the mercy of fate and had to go into exile to the distant fort of Jinji in the Carnatic. President Kruger did not return till the war was over: but he was safe in Europe. It was otherwise with Rajaram; for even Jinji was eventually taken, and he returned to the Deccan and had his share of the war.

The advantage to the Boers as well as the Mahrattas, however, lay in the constitution of their military equipment and the habits of their soldiery. We all know by this time how mobile the Boer army was. The following extract from Grant Duff's description of the Mahratta soldiers, two centuries ago will be found interesting in this connection.—

“An irregular assembly of several thousand horsemen united by preconcerted agreement in some unfrequented part of the country. They set off with little provisions, with no baggage except the blanket on their saddles and no animals but led horses with bags prepared for the reception of their plunder. If they halted during the part of a night like the Pindharies of modern times they slept with their bridles in their hands; if in the day, while the horses were fed and refreshed, the men reposed with little or no shelter from the scorching heat except—

ing such as might occasionally, be found under a bush or a tree. Sir William has described the guerilla fighters thus:—"Their clouds of horsemen, scantily clad with only a folded blanket for a saddle rode jeeringly round the imperial cavalry swathed in sword-proof wadding or fainting under chain armour and with difficulty spurring their heavily caprisoned steeds out of a prancing amble. If the imperial cavalry charged in force they charged into thin air. If they pursued in detachments they were speared man by man."

The difference between the Mahratta and Aurangzeb's troops corresponds with the difference between those of the Boer and British forces. Owing to the mobility of the Mahrattas the work of taking the hill forts by the Mahomedan army was as soon neutralised as accomplished, and it is owing to the mobility of the Boers that terrible reverses occurred within a few miles of Pretoria and other towns though securely held by thousands of British troops. Governor Kasemkhan was surrounded and General Himatkhan was entrapped and defeated much in the same way as General Methun and General Gatacre. In 1703 the Mahratta guerilla fighters surprised an imperial division on the banks of the Nurmada 21,000 strong and massacred or drove it pell mell into the river before the troops could even saddle their horses. Two years after, the very imperial elephants were carried off from the pasture ground outside the Royal camp, and Aurangzeb was himself at one time very nearly captured, just as much as Lord Roberts in the Pretoria plot or Lord Kitchener owing to train-wrecking. Even in details this similarity is seen. The patriotism and bravery of the Boer women was described in our last article; on the other hand the part played by the heroic Tarabai in the Mahratta war of independence is well-known.

The difference between the results of the Mahratta and the Boer guerilla, waged two centuries apart, is great. The Mahrattas won the game; the Boers lost it. But as observed already the failure of the Boers is due as much as the success of the Mahrattas to factors entirely extraneous which need not be dwelt upon for our present purpose. The only point to be noted is that the guerilla war is from time to time to be met with in the world's history, and has always succeeded more or less in its purpose. The improved methods of warfare may minimise the opportunities for it. But it will reappear as often as disproportionate armies will have to fight out between themselves, the cause of justice, might being on the one hand and right on the other.

What the future will be for the Boers cannot be seen. On the one hand the Boers themselves have only a short while ago declared that at the end of twenty years there would be another Boer war when the boys now in their swaddling clothes will be old enough to fight. On the other hand Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain have, before sanctioning the peace satisfied themselves that recurrence of a Boer war should be impossible. Would the Boers ultimately trek once more and go anywhere, rather than be subject to the British Crown? Or will the descendants of Dewet, Delarey, Botha and Cronje, vie with one another in showing loyalty to Edward IX, or Albert or Arthur I and be busy in composing coronation odes and celebrating the victory of British arms at Pardeburgh or Ellandslagate?

(12-6-1902)

destroyed in the Transvaal." "All of it" he said. And then correcting himself "Well," he added, "I should say all, except about five percent." "But," I said "do you mean everything?" "Everything" he said, "the farmsteads, stock,—all the property we had has been destroyed." "But," I objected, "our people say that they only burned farms when there was an abuse of the white flag or when they had been defended as fortresses." He smiled sadly and said, "Then what do they say to the burning of whole towns?" "Yes, whole towns," he repeated; "six at least to my knowledge that I have seen with my own eyes have been laid in ashes. You could not say that of every house in the town," he continued, "everything has been destroyed. It was so ordered." The war has done for all the Boers what the famine did two years ago for many a peasant in India. Their rehabilitation needs money, and to collect this money the Boer Generals have come out to the Continent. In England, however, they have failed in obtaining from Mr. Chamberlain a fulfilment of the assurances given by Lord Kitchener, and from England, therefore, they have proceeded to the Continent, where they will make their appeal to the human instincts of the rulers and the people, and see if the Continental admiration for the Boers, so profuse and demonstrative at times, can be translated into £. s. and d. It is probable that the Generals will get interviews with the Continental rulers, and their personal acquaintance will confirm the favourable impression which the Generals have, by their conduct of the war, made upon the ministerial circles in Europe. All this may perhaps lead to the collection of funds which is the direct object of their tour.

It is sad, however, to see that the original motherland of the Boers is not in a position to assist them appreciably more than the other Continental nations. Holland has



now lost the energy as well as the power which, in the days of the Republic, it once possessed; and it has now been reduced to the status of almost a third class power. One could easily understand, therefore, the pangs Holland must have had silently endured during the Boer war while watching the brave Boers fighting against their powerful enemies and yet being unable to render them the least assistance. There is, however, some consolation in the thought that though Holland could not render any assistance to the Boers, the Boers have helped indirectly to rouse up their motherland from her torpor. The degeneration of Holland has been brought about by a number of causes, but most of these are accidental and do not touch the spirit of the nation. In 1830 the final blow was given to the ideal which William of Orange had put before his eyes when Holland was separated from Belgium, and all hope had to be abandoned of creating a combined and powerful Netherland State that would hold its own against France or Prussia. The ruin of the national ideal caused a degeneration to set in. Says a writer in the "Our Neighbours" series, in his book on "Dutch Life in Town and Country":—"The spectacle of immense armies of millions of men in the neighbouring States seems to have produced a sense of helplessness among the people of the Netherlands and to have led them to believe that resistance, were it needed, would be futile." But the Boer War seems to have galvanised the Dutch nation though reduced to the above condition. For the same writer later on observes:—"Curiously enough, the Transvaal War has revived the national hope and confidence by showing what a well-armed people without military training can do when standing on the defensive. Time is necessary to prove whether this new sentiment will remove the fatalistic feeling of helplessness that has been creeping over

Dutch public men and brace them to efforts worthy of their ancestry." If time will ultimately really show that the Dutch nation could take heart from the lessons of the Boer War and successfully apply those lessons to its practical politics, the Boers may be persuaded to believe that their blood did not flow for nothing, though it did not secure to them *their independence* in South Africa

(12-10-11)

End of Part II

**BOOK IV**  
**SPEECHES & ADDRESSES**

## Amraoti Congress ✓

*Speech made by Mr. N. C. Kelkar, in supporting the resolution about the Provincial Executive Councils at the Indian National Congress, 1897 :—*

Mr. President, Ladies, and Countrymen,

I have great pleasure in supporting the proposition proposed by the Hon. Subrao. A good deal may be said on the resolution, but I shall go over only that ground which is not travelled over by the Hon. proposer. You must be aware, gentlemen, that the earlier portion of the proposition contains or is based upon a supposition that it is a wise policy to appoint English statesmen to the Governorships of Madras and Bombay to the exclusion of the Indian Services. Now it may be asked whether that is really a wise policy. I for one think, gentlemen, that it is a wise policy. It has indeed to be admitted that the *fruition* of that policy has not been always full or happy. For it was very rarely that English statesmen who could be called statesmen without a complete outrage upon the language ever come out to India to govern the Presidencies. Our sad experience, at least on the Bombay side, has sometimes even gone so far that we have had to accept mere English *sportsmanship* for English statesmanship. There is reason why all this should be so. For they do not regard it in England, I think, a high honour to be a Provincial Governor in India. These governorships are given away as a reward to humble and favourite mediocrity; or at least India is regarded as a trainingground for political colts to be broken in and trained in view of more ambitious careers and races to be won in the Colonial or Home Government. On this account we must despair of getting for Governors men like Sir Charles Dilke or Mr. Leonard Courtney.

On the other hand, it could be urged that efficient rulers could be found out of the Indian Services as is amply proved by the examples of Sir R. Temple and Sir B. Frere who were *quondam* Governors of Bombay. In this way there is a two-fold objection to be raised against the policy in question. But notwithstanding all that, it must be admitted that the policy is wise. The administration of the Presidencies is a great and solemn trust, and though the work is more or less executive, still the man at the head of the administration must have a judicial temperament, in order to be a good Governor. He must be a man completely free from the bias of party or officialism. He need not know details. Even ignorance of the country and the people may be a blessing in his case. He looks to *principles* on which the administration is to be worked. He is like the man at the helm of a ship. The slightest change in the angle 'at the helm' cuts up a very large segment, in the long run, in the career of the ship. If the Governor is liberal the whole administration becomes liberalised at once. What we want at the head of Provincial administration is a man bred up in liberty, experienced in politics and possessed of a balmy aroma of culture and liberalism. And only an English statesman can be that. Once you admit the wisdom of the policy of appointing an English statesman to the governorship, the prayer in the resolution follows as a matter of course. At present there are two members of the Council. These are invariably Civilians, *i. e.* men who have spent their life in doing the official role of Nabobism. They know much of the administration but they know rather too much. The constitution of the Council is being even worse lately on account of the tendency to ignore the judicial element in it. It is an unwritten law that while one member of the Council should be a revenue member the other should be a judicial mem-

ber. But the latest appointment to a membership of the Bombay Executive Council was a complete violation of that law. For when Mr. Birdwood, a judicial member, retired, a revenue member took his place. We have nothing to say against individuals. But on principle the appointment of Sir Charles Ollivant to the Bombay Council is objectionable. When a pair of fiery horses is yoked to the carriage there is great danger that the carriage may drive furiously and for a fall. It will be thus seen that the present constitution of the Executive Councils needs mending. The best way to mend them would be to appoint to them an additional member not being a Civil Servant or a member of any other Indian Service. And though it is not so stated in the Resolution, I would even go one inch further and say that that additional member may be, if possible, a native non-official, say the senior elected member of the Legislative Councils. Gentlemen, do not think it is too ambitious, for we already have aspired to a membership of the Executive Council even of the Secretary of State for India. Once more I commend the proposition to your acceptance and hope you will pass it. (16-1-1898)

### The Press Committees

The following is a full report of the speech made by Mr. N. C. Kelkar at the Madras Congress of 1899 in seconding the resolution about the Press-Committees, moved by Mr. Chambers.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It seems to be generally supposed that I have been a victim of the Press-Committees in condemnation of which this proposition is moved, and I fear it

was regarded as a point of propriety that I should be *for that reason* made a victim also of the necessity of there being some one to second the proposition. I appeal to you, Gentlemen, to say if it is right to victimise a man doubly again *because* he has been made a victim once already. Well, I may have been a victim of the Press-Committees or, on the other hand, I may have vitality enough in me to manage a hundred such Press-Committees as are instituted in the Bombay Presidency. Whatever that may be, I stand here before you not to be autobiographical nor to tell you a story of individual suffering. I am not here to ask your pity or commiseration but to ask your indignant vote against the hateful institution of the Press-Committees which are only a thinly veiled press-censorship and as such a distinct disgrace to the British rule. My leader has already told you about the genesis of the Press-Committees and I do not want to add much to it. Mr. Chambers has said that the motives and intentions of Government in instituting Press-Committees were very good. I do not deny that; I am put in mind, however, of a maxim which says that "the way to hell is paved with good intentions." I do not undertake to say whether the case of the Press-Committees is one to which the maxim may be applicable. We shall be content to wait and judge by the results. As I have already said, I do not wish to say much with regard to the genesis of the Press-Committees; I shall, however, read to you an extract from a letter written by Mr. Lamb, the official representative of Government in Poona, in reply to an enquiry made a by Poona editor about the Press-Committees.

"Government considered that the weekly abstract, compiled by the Reporter on the Native Press, was lacking both in the rapidity and the closeness of scrutiny which it deemed desirable. It, therefore, instructed Dis-

district Magistrates to themselves arrange for the careful observation of the newspapers published in their districts. The District Magistrate not being able to undertake this duty personally, was empowered to form at Headquarters a committee subject to his immediate control, consisting of 3 or 5 members of whom the majority should be official, and the President should be the Huzur Deputy Collector or the City Magistrate."

At Poona, the late Acting Collector, Mr. Bonus, accordingly constituted a Committee of 5 comprising the City Magistrate as President, the City Mamlatdar, the City Police Inspector and two non-official gentlemen, who, in reply to his enquiries, expressed their willingness to serve on the Committee. By the bye this statement is not perfectly accurate and if it were relevant or pertinent to the present proposition I should certainly have controverted it. The duty of the Committee is to bring to the notice of the District Magistrate anything in any newspaper published in the District, which in the opinion of the Committee is deserving of the attention of the District Magistrate. The Committee is available for use if the District Magistrate thinks fit, as an intermediary between himself and the Press of the district.

Gentlemen, we need not concern ourselves with the details of the elaborate scheme unfolded herein. It is no business of ours to see whether the native press reporter is really a lazy or incompetent fellow as he is alleged to be and draws his pay for nothing; but we are concerned more pertinently with the ostensible objects with which the Press-Committees were instituted. Now these objects are two-fold—(1) To institute a closer scrutiny of the Native Press and (2) Creating an intermediary between the Government and the press. As for the first we have no objection whatever to such scrutiny as Government want,



Let them if they like put on the eyes of a lynx and thereon also the most powerful magnifying glasses. We do not fear that, for what is once printed and published ought to be only as much open and definite to the lynx-and-magnifying-glass-eyed Government as to him who is content to use his unaided human eyes. But it must be remembered, gentlemen, that when a man sets out with a determination to make a scrutiny, he is sure to be tempted to justify that scrutiny by reading between the lines what was never in the lines themselves or even in the mind of the writer for the matter of that. A close scrutiny will be only too welcome to us if the medium of the Press-Committee would faithfully convey the good things as well as bad things that are said in the Native press. At present, however, the Pres-Committees are acting the part of only a Devil's Advocate. As for the second object *viz.* creating an intermediary between the Government and the Press I think the Press-Committees have never been realised to be anything more than a conduit-pipe with one end of it, however, hopelessly and hermetically sealed. While this conduit-pipe opens freely and sometimes invitingly where any information is to be drawn from the press it promptly shuts up in the face of the press when any information is required from Government. Whenever Government were sought to be tapped for information through the Press-Committees, the application was sure to be disposed of in the terms of one or the other of the formulas with which our members of the Legislative Councils are so much familiar. But that is not all. Unlimited as is the scope of the Press-Committees for any useful purpose it is quite unlimited for mischief; for, in two instances at least have the Press-Committees already abused their powers in giving a warning to the newspaper editors though I would challenge any one to point out a word in

the statement of objects of the Press-Committees as given by Mr. Lamb in his letter or the Bombay Government in the Legislative Council or Lord George Hamilton in Parliament which could suggest that the Press-Committees were authorized to give warnings. Our quarrel, however, is not with any particular Press-Committee or any individual member of any particular Press-Committee for such abuse of the powers, but we object to the Press-Committee as an institution not because it has proved particularly mischievous in its operation but because it is an index to the suspicious and aggressive turn which the mind of the British Government has lately taken because it is, as the President remarked yesterday in his address, a sample of the reactionary policy which Government have begun to manifest to the utter disappointment and disgust of all friends of progress. The Press-Committees have come in only as a natural sequence to the amendments of the Criminal law. The Penal Code made the entertainment of the slightest feeling of contempt for Government, however natural and irresistible from actions of Government, an act of disloyalty and sedition; and the Criminal Procedure Code gave wide and unlimited powers to the Magistrate over editors. The gun and gun powder being thus ready, some agency was needed to blow up the editors by putting the spark to it. Gentlemen, that amiable function belongs to the Press-Committees. At present most of the districts in my Presidency such as Poona, Satara, Belgaum, Khandesh, (as our friend the Hon'ble Mr. Garud may tell you) have got their Press-Committees and I only wonder how the other Provincial Governments have as yet neglected to equip themselves with this peace of armament—these land-torpedoes to blow the editors up; and I wonder all the more because I think that Native Press in the other provinces is not

altogether a paragon of moderation or loyalty judging of course by the absurd tests which have been applied to the press of the Bombay Presidency. A righteous hope was expressed not long ago by one of the speakers (Hon'ble Surendranath Bannerji) that the other Provinces should not be without the Press-Committees if they were really such good things as they are represented to be. Gentlemen, in the fullness of time perhaps you too may get them if you deserve them though for your sake I wish you do not get them. But as you all know the poison of political re-action is infectious like the plague poison and it is very likely to catch the officialdom in other parts of India except when it may meet with such strong anti-dispositioned constitutions as that of your good Governor Sir Arthur Havelock or your good Lieutenant Governor Sir Antony Macdonell. Well, that is why, gentlemen, we in Congress assembled, must protest against the Press-Committees. I know it may be said that our protest is uncalled for because there is not a press-censorship in India. I know that the Press-Committees are not in the recognised form of a press censorship under which newspaper articles have to be submitted for magisterial revision before publication, but one could be a tyrant without actually being a Sultan of Turkey; so also there can be a press censorship without it being in its usually recognised form. Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in seconding the proposition and hope you will readily accept it. Let us hope that the Press-Committees would be abolished by Government and the favour will be more agreeable to us if as Mr. Chambers has suggested, it comes from the hand of a lady.

(15-1-1899)

## The Universities Commission ✓

Mr. President and Gentlemen.

The resolution entrusted to me reaffirms, in the first instance, the resolution on the subject made last year by the Conference at Sholapur. On the very day the proposition was moved we received the first intimation by wire that Lord Curzon had issued a Government resolution on the subject of the Universities Commission's report; and subsequently three most important educational bodies in this country have pronounced against the report and practically supported, though unconsciously, the resolution of the Conference. If we, therefore, return to the subject and reaffirm our resolution it is not with obstinacy but with a reasonable pride. Now, Mr. Padhye has already read to you a passage from Lord Curzon's speech in the Legislative Council on this subject which shows that His Lordship has almost threatened to set public opinion aside with dramatic effect. Someone has said that if Lord Curzon were not a good *state* manager he would have been a good *stage* manager. But even while being a *state* manager, Lord Curzon has been giving us now and then a piece of his excellent stage management. He is a master of the science of effect, as has been seen in his treatment of the subject of the Universities Commission. The curtain was yet to be opened when we first heard of the subject of University reform, when a secret conclave met at Simla and the distant rumbling on the hill only spread a vague terror over us. The Universities Commission then came out—a mouse from the labours of the mountain! It trotted in the different parts of India in a short time and we all know how useless is the report that the Commission made. But at this stage Lord Curzon came forward, and while he

simply befooled the Commission and modified some of their proposals in an off hand fashion, he referred the report to the different Universities; but when he finds senate after senate condemning the report unequivocally, he again assumes a threatening attitude and says he will shape his own course without the assistance of anybody. But it is not becoming even for a masterful man like Lord Curzon to do so after the pronouncement of the senates of the older Universities; for, in the first place the senates are composed of men who have received the highest education. Next the Universities contain some of the best educational experts. But the most conclusive argument is yet behind. And it is this that the opinion expressed by the senates in the matter is the opinion of the agents specially appointed for the purpose by the Government. For, a very large majority in the senates is made up of Fellows *nominated* by Government, the election of the Fellows by graduates being of very recent origin, and the proportion of elected to nominated fellows being yet very small. I say, therefore, that Lord Curzon is estopped from going against the views of the senates and one may challenge even the Law Member of the Government of India to refuse the position that the Government is bound by the opinions expressed by the senates, that is to say, its agents specially appointed for the purpose. The question is of University education and not education generally, and the University Fellows are appointed for regulating University education. Turning to the second part of the resolution I say that the way which has been adopted by the Government is not the way for effecting real University reform. There were two lines on which discussion ran with regard to University reform. The first was with regard to the machinery of the University and the second was with regard to the internal structure of University education. The

Government has practically set aside public opinion as regards the latter and stuck to the recommendation of the Commission with regard to the question of machinery. The reform of the machinery will however ultimately come to nothing practically. Everything depends upon the expense that will be incurred on University education. Here again there are two schools of thought; some say that the people ought to take the lead while others say that it is the duty of the Government to be pioneer in this respect. I agree with the latter view, and think that Government ought not only to be pioneer in the movement but must always continue to spend largely to make their own colleges model institutions. But what do we find actually to be the case? I have in my hand the report of the Educational Department for the year 1873 in which I find the expense on the College Department to be only Rs 2,30,000. At present it is only about 2,75,000. The percentage of the sum expended on the College Department to the total amount spent on education generally was about 20 per cent in 1873, and in 1903 it comes to about only 11 per cent. There is thus a distinct decrease in the percentage of expenditure on the College Department. Government, however, seem to have got strange notions of efficiency and their result would be, as pointed out by Mr. Mehta in his speech in the Bombay Senate, to create a solitary minaret in a vast desert. But we would certainly not like to have a solitary minaret while things around are barren as in a desert. Education must have a broader base and such a base cannot be secured unless Government spend more largely on University Education before enforcing their idea of efficiency.

(10-5-1903)

## The Late Mr. A. O. Hume

In moving the resolution entrusted to him, Mr. N. C. Kelkar said:—

A resolution like this requires no elaborate argument or eloquent appeal, to recommend it to your acceptance. For, I feel sure that while there is no word in it which is not a direct echo of the sentiments of your heart at this time, the resolution, even taken as a whole, does not do full justice to the whole of these sentiments. The language of a resolution, submitted to a meeting like this, ought to be brief; and brief also must be the words which one may speak in its support. But even if time did not impose any limits upon my speech, I could not possibly speak out all I feel within my heart. The language of grief is said to be brief. And it is true only in this sense that words can never succeed in expressing what the heavy heart feels. There is that something passing strange within the mind which defies expression.

The news of Mr. Hume's death does not indeed come upon us as a surprise: for he was an old man going down the vale of years and was expected, sooner or later, as all mortal men are expected, to be shed like a yellow leaf before a wintry wind, and to be gathered with his ancestors. But the knowledge that Nature's laws are uniform and inexorable, can never tone down the poignance of grief, like ours, at Mr. Hume's death, because time does *not* obliterate but only deepens our sense of gratitude to the deceased.

Now what is it that Mr. Hume has done, for us and our country, so that we may mourn his death? And as if he were not only one among us, but perhaps the best beloved of us? The resolution, indeed, touches one as-

pect of this question, when it describes him as the 'father and founder' of the Indian National Congress. But that after all is only one among the many aspects of Mr. Hume's character. The idea of a National Congress, for a country like India, is undoubtedly a very brilliant idea in itself. For what can surpass the charm and the romance of an assembly like the Indian National Congress, which welds together so many and various Indian nationalities, formed by race and religion, into an entirely new nationality, and binds it firm all over with the very subtle and yet very strong silk-and-gold thread of political sentiment? But even this brilliant idea of a National Congress might conceivably have been evolved as a mere intellectual concept by a habitual solver of problems. The world is always so full of cranks, and their busy brains are responsible for ever new and strange ideas likely to set us wondering with our mouths agape. But the world, though it may admire the genius of intellectual giants, is never touched with *gratitude* to them. Mr. Hume was not only a producer of the great *intellectual idea* of the National Congress but more. As pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Gokhale in his speech at the Caxton Hall meeting on a similar occasion, it is not only that Mr. Hume conceived the idea of the National Congress, but that the idea would never have been realised and taken a concrete shape and form, if an influential ex-official and an irreproachable Englishman like Mr. Hume, had not come forward to work it out with his own hands.

But, gentlemen, I would like to go even one step further and say, that it is not quite enough to earn our gratitude for any one to have, like Mr. Hume, intellectually conceived the idea of the Congress and worked it out as an indispensable active instrument of it. For, do we not know that both these items of the above description



apply to another Englishman, with perhaps as much fitness as to Mr. Hume? You must have guessed, gentlemen, that I am referring to no less a personage than Lord Dufferin. It is now common knowledge, that it was Lord Dufferin that really suggested the idea of the I. N. Congress as a political body and organisation; and it must also be easy to perceive that had it not been for His Lordship's encouragement, all the brilliant initiative and all the zealous pursuit of the idea of a national assembly for India, on Mr. Hume's part, would have shown not much practical result. The true parentage of the Congress is, in this way, so evenly—or I may even say so unevenly—distributed between Mr. Hume and Lord Dufferin and yet, while you to-day mourn the death of Mr. Hume, as the father and founder of the Congress, you hardly ever think of Lord Dufferin except as an opponent, if not an enemy, to the political aspirations of India; and you hardly recall his Lordship's connection with the Congress, without having your bitter reminiscences revived of the sudden and remarkable change of front, evolved by the ex-Viceroy, as also his blighting and remorseless criticism of the mildest and the gentlest discussion, which the representatives of the Indian people held over the problems of Indian administration.

—That, indeed, is the difference, gentlemen, between, one parent of the Congress and another. Both of them could equally claim to share the credit of evolving the Congress as a brilliant intellectual idea out of their brains; but the emotional attitude of the two Englishmen towards the Congress differed so materially from one another, that within two or three years of the birth of the Congress one would have given anything to kill the babe and the other would have given anything to save it from that fate. Like a parent ashamed to own his illegitimate off-spring Lord

Dufferin turned his face away from the Congress and we hear no more of him in that connection, he passes into the serene region of our oblivion. But Mr. Hume's love for the Congress only grew deep and deeper with time. And so we find him, even when he had left India, and when he could no more hope to look upon the face of his beloved child, he unselfishly did what work he could, to advance its interests in England; and he sent to the Congress, every year, the best and the most righteous wishes and prayers his heart could think of, on the eve of holy Christmas. We had, in course of time, almost forgotten the benign and smiling face of Mr. Hume, but we, in the Congress, were always sure that whatever manœuvres or evolutions tactical British politicians were or were not carrying out on the mock battle-field of the Parliament 'in defence of India,' there was, in a distant corner of England at least one warm heart that was beating for this unbeloved country.

But while I have laid so much stress upon the emotional aspect of Mr. Hume's work, I have not forgotten that the gospel he was preaching, both to Englishmen and Indians, was not a gospel of mad benevolence or rash enterprise. It was a gospel of hope, union and organization, which any the sanest and stoutest mind must admit to be the only gospel that can be and should be preached to a nation, not yet quite dead and bent upon working out its own salvation. To the Indians he said:—"You must close up your ranks. You must rely upon yourselves for the uplifting of your nation. You must learn to agitate, and to agitate on rational and constitutional lines. You must discipline your men and marshal your national forces. You must learn to show forbearance and courtesy to your official opponents; you must not incur the bad habit of flaring up at officials for small and human faults of theirs;

and yet you must not forget that even constitutional battles cannot be fought with only Rose-water and Kisses. If you are hit, you may hit hard in return, straight from your shoulder but never below the belt of your opponents. Work and agitate and yet above all learn to be patient." And I will recall to your mind the one little para. from his last message to the Congress, which shows that with all his preaching of patience and forbearance, this practical Englishman was not at all despondent, but that he was as fully cognisant of *the working of the higher powers* in behalf of India as any dreaming Nationalist or any emotional Progressist in India. He lived and died in the belief that India did deserve to get Self-Government in the fulness of time.

To Englishmen, on the other hand, he said "Don't despise the Indian! Remember that he has inherited a great and an ancient civilisation; deprecate in yourselves and others the habit of looking at Indian affairs through rose-tinted official spectacles, the habit of looking upon the railway and telegraph as exhausting all the possible categories of good government. Don't forget that the administration, which looks good on paper, may not necessarily be good in practice; it may be like Portho's belt, 'grandly gold-embroidered in front, but very plain and ragged leather behind.' The proof of the pudding lies in the eating; the Indian point of view deserves to be taken into account fully as much as the official point of view; and the Indians must be allowed to take off the delusive surface of official veneer, with all legitimate instruments. It is not loyalty but lying, to ignore the evils that exist; the Congress had a right to speak in the name of the nation; and that its counsels ought to be respected, as befitting that representative character."

Now in all this there is certainly nothing to which any reasonable man, Indian or British, can take any ex-

ception. And yet, we know, that he was looked upon with suspicion as a dangerous man, holding in his hands the keys of rebellion. We all know that for persisting in preaching this gospel of reason, Mr. Hume had to lose one of the greatest assets for which a man cares to live, viz. the esteem of his own people. But the thought of that grave loss never deterred him from pursuing the straight course he had laid before himself. Of course, the measure of his unpopularity with his own men is not either the reason or the measure of *our* regard for him. Each stands on its own independent grounds. But Mr. Hume's indifference to popularity, among his own men, is perhaps the best evidence that we can have of his earnestness of purpose and his capacity for self-sacrifice in a righteous cause. Our love for Mr. Hume may not perhaps be wholly unselfish. But that does not detract from the fact that *he* was a good and a great soul. And the aberration of his mental star, from the orbit of the ordinary Englishman who can naturally look upon India only as a second love, if a love at all, shows that he belonged to a superior kind of beings, who are rare to meet with, but who, when you come across them, emphasise by their own example the great fact that there *does exist* such a thing as *humanity* which, though comprising of all the human men as they are, is yet, in the aggregate, something more, something different and something better than all the human men put together.

(1-9-1912)

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## The Transvaal Trouble

The following is the text of the speech made by Mr. N. C. Kelkar at the meeting, in connection with the Transvaal trouble, held in the Kirloskar Theatre week before last :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen.

My friend R. B. Godbole has already dealt with the subject of this resolution. To what he has said I would add only this. This is a very grave affair which we are here assembled to discuss. It is an affair which involves two most precious things. One is the respect for the status of British Indians abroad, and the other is respect for the reputation of British statesmanship. But the two are so nicely balanced and interdependent that if the one is lost the other will be lost also, and then irretrievably.

The resolution very properly describes the situation as a crucial moment in the history of South Africa. I am afraid, however, that the crisis is the more real for us in India than for South Africa. The white nation in South Africa is just on the point of being *crystallised*. And if British Indians are allowed to be thrown out at this critical moment perhaps as being foreign matter, from that part of the empire, then they will be so thrown out to the end of time. You will thus see that a great principle is at stake; and you know that saying that whereas expediency or practice may have, like a cat, so many as nine lives, a great principle and a true principle has only one life. It follows from this that if you allow the principle of the rightful status of the British Indians to be sacrificed at this moment, then rest assured, you will have sacrificed it.

cerned. But the plain question before British statesmen now is—will they succumb to the selfish ambition of the Colonials or manfully assert their own good sense ? Which will they choose—whether the good-will of the Colonials or the loyalty of the Indian people ? Those who have read English history know full well, that England can go to war with even friendly nations for causes infinitely inferior to the status of 30 crores of British Indians. In 1857 England went to war with China over the ridiculous question of the status of a small despicable, semi-piratical, wooden boat. This miserable vessel, the *Lorcha Arrow*, as it was called, was really a Chinese vessel manned by Chinese crew, and it only occasionally ventured to hoist the British flag for the purposes of protection in its piratical undertakings from Chinese authorities. This boat has thus no vestige of a right to assume the British Status, and yet for the sake of this miserable boat, England bombarded Canton and made war on China.

I will give you also another instance. In 1847 England was on the verge of a war with Greece, France and Russia combined. And what was the cause ? Simply because she might vindicate the claim of one Don Pacifico. Now who, do you suppose, was this Don Pacifico ? He was a Jew, of Portugese extraction, a resident of Gibraltar, only temporarily sojourning in Athens. It so happened that an Athenian mob attacked him in his house on provocation; and then the question was only what amount of compensation was rightfully due to Don Pacifico from the Grecian Government. The Grecian Government were quite willing to award a reasonable amount. But Don Pacifico was an unreasonably avaricious man. He, a miserable and poor fellow, claimed exorbitant compensation in such a grand style that it was said that even Queen Cleopatra

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As for the reputation of British statesmanship, it is a thing with which we are of course only indirectly con-

we not ask the Government of India not only to boycott South Africa for the purpose of labour supply as the resolution before you does recommend, but also to deport every South African white who comes into India for a similar reason, also to boycott South African goods, if any, and impose exemplary import duties on those goods alone ? Only drastic measures can be of any good in such a matter, and industrial boycott as a political weapon has done much good in recent times not only in India but also in the other parts of the world. I have not perhaps minced matters, but I think I have spoken the sentiments of my heart. With these few words I support the resolution,

(10-10-1909)

### The Vernaculars as a Medium of Instruction

The following is the full text of the speech made on this subject by Mr. N. C. Kelkar, B. A., LL. B., before the sitting of the Baroda Sahitya Parishad on Monday, the 25th October, 1909:—

Maharajasaheb, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
I feel very great pleasure in supporting this resolution. You all know that yesterday we discussed the subject of the Marathi Language and also adopted a resolution to the effect that the Bombay University should be asked to include the study of the Marathi in its curricula. To-day we are here concerned with the question of not only the Marathi but all the vernaculars of India. We thus stand to-day on a higher and a broader pedestal and it is, therefore, quite fitting that we have here on the platform representative men from all the diffe-



of Egypt might have been contented with bed furniture so luxurious as Don Pacifico represented himself to have in his *common use*. England knew all this, and yet in such a bad cause it was that Lord Palmerston, the patriotic Foreign Minister, laid down in the course of Parliamentary debate what has been since handed down as a maxim of sound political wisdom in international politics. He contended that in all that he had done he had been actuated by the resolve that the poorest claimant who bore the name of a 'British Citizen' should be protected by the whole strength of England against the oppression of a foreign Government. And in a peroration of thrilling power, Lord Palmerston asked for the verdict of the House to decide "whether, as the Roman, in the days of old, held himself free from indignity when he could say '*civis Romanus sum*,' so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong."

Now I ask you, gentlemen, in all earnestness to answer one question. Can we say that we have the benefit of this watchful eye and this powerful arm in the present case? Is it not clear by the conduct of the Imperial Government that they regard the loyalty of 30 crores of Indian subjects as inferior to the goodwill of a handful of Colonials? Is it not clear that they estimate a despicable piratical Chinese boat and a Portugese Jew at far greater worth than their loyal subjects in the Indian Empire? I dare say thoughtful British statesmen ought simply to be ashamed of the contrast. But if *they* don't, then I think, the time is for us to feel ashamed to have such statesmen as our rulers, and to try such remedial measures as we have in our hands to use. If an Indian is deported from South Africa as an undesirable person, why should

we not ask the Government of India not only to boycott South Africa for the purpose of labour supply as the resolution before you does recommend, but also to deport every South African white who comes into India for a similar reason, also to boycott South African goods, if any, and impose exemplary import duties on those goods alone ? Only drastic measures can be of any good in such a matter, and industrial boycott as a political weapon has done much good in recent times not only in India but also in the other parts of the world. I have not perhaps minced matters, but I think I have spoken the sentiments of my heart. With these few words I support the resolution,

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rent provinces in India—men who are fully qualified and competent to express an opinion on the subject. The question of the vernaculars has a double aspect; one is the study of the vernaculars as a substantive study, and the other is the use of the vernaculars as a medium of instruction. The discussion that we made yesterday related to the first aspect of the question of the Marathi vernacular. That discussion, in my humble opinion, completely proved the proposition that the Marathi language deserves *on its merits to be studied as a language* and that the social and national regeneration of India did depend to a certain extent upon that study and the beneficial results that study leads to. The University is the guardian of the educational interests of the country, and I think that the appeal that was so influentially and earnestly made yesterday to our worthy Guru Dr. Bhandarkar, as the trusted adviser of the University, will prove successful. But I am aware that an honest difference of opinion may exist as to the merits of the literature in the Marathi language, and those who think that Marathi is not so rich in literature as English for instance, will not naturally be able to advocate the substantive study of Marathi with that gusto or enthusiasm which those, who admire Marathi literature even such as it is, can command. The former will say "Let us have first the wealth and variety of literature which other languages already possess and there will be time enough to move the University to include the substantive study of Marathi in its curricula." The other side will retort that "this is exactly reversing the natural order of things and that the needed wealth and variety in Marathi literature is bound to follow from the inclusion of the Marathi in the University curricula." And in this way the controversy fairly admits of a bout in logical fencing.

But the question of the Vernaculars as a medium of instruction stands on a different footing altogether and does not admit of any difference of opinion. The question as stated in the simplest manner comes to this. "Which should be the medium of the process of thinking and of the expression of the results of that thinking—a man's own mother tongue or a foreign language?" And I scarcely think that there is any one here assembled who will feel any hesitation in giving the verdict in favour of the mother-tongue. This answer, moreover, will not be, and in fact, need not be affected by any political consideration. Sentimental patriotism has no more place in the discussion of this question than political or state policy. It is a question of psychology and a question of the theory of education pure and simple. Let no one be misled by the apparent conflict there is here between English as the language of the rulers and the Vernaculars as the languages of the ruled; you must remember that the conflict, if any, will not be the less real or fierce, if the conflict lay between one Vernacular and another, instead of the Vernaculars and English. For suppose we had a less enlightened and a less statesmanlike ruler at Baroda than our present Maharaja and suppose that for the simple reason that he is himself a Maratha and the language at the Court is Marathi, he were to-morrow to ordain that Marathi should be the medium of instruction of the boys whose mother tongue is Gujrathi, then the subjects of Baroda would have as legitimate a right to find fault with him as we Indians in the different provinces now actually find fault with our Universities for maintaining English instead of the Vernaculars as the medium of instruction. Pray do not persuade yourselves that the advocacy of the vernaculars as a medium of instruction is the same thing as the depreciation of English as a liv-

ing classical language. I think, I yield to none here in my admiration and appreciation of the English language and literature. And I think that, we in India as a nation must be eternally grateful to the English language for opening to us endless vistas and beautiful avenues of Western thought and what is perhaps of still greater importance *viz.* the priceless store of national and political literature which has entirely revolutionised the aspect of things about the Indian ideals and Indian modes of thought. But though I so highly think of English as a second language, I simply dislike it as if it were my enemy, when that language seeks to take the place of my mother-tongue and forces my thinking to be done not in Marathi but in English. These are strong words; but certainly not so strong as the needs of the case deserve. I sincerely worship English at a distance. I heartily welcome it, though a stranger, as a friendly benefactor and companion even in my house and acknowledge its debt to me in point of new thoughts and ideas. But when not being content with that measure of homage the English language yields to the temptation of self-aggrandisement so far as to drive Marathi from the hearth of my heart, I can tolerate the stranger no longer and will certainly like to collar it and throw it out of the window. It may be otherwise if I wanted to seek the short shrift salvation of Christianity and lose my Nationality. But like everyone here assembled to-day I am ambitious to live and die as an Indian Hindu; and I cannot tamely allow the English language to pollute the springs of my heart and to take possession of all the avenues and approaches of thought leading to my mind. The point about this seeming inconsistency in me may thus be easily explained. I like English thoughts and ideas; but I like them only in so far as I can call them and make them my own. And mental assimilation is the only

thing that can enable me to make them mine. When I can assimilate them, they can give nourishment to my mind and my heart, and make me stronger. But if I take them in without assimilation, they remain in me as a foreign body and like a spear point embedded in the flesh, they inflame the region around them and make me uncomfortable and unhappy. But when you or I, *e. g.* think in the Marathi language, then any other foreign thought or idea that we take in has to run the gauntlet of the Marathi sentinel guard that is posted at the turnpike at every corner; and when an idea, howsoever foreign or heterogeneous, submits itself in the journey to our mind and tongue, through the vernacular phrase, vernacular idiom, vernacular grammar and vernacular syntax, then it loses nearly all its foreign character and we are able to call it and use it as our own.

But look at the condition of things that now exists in India. Here not only in our offices, our colleges, our large business places, we have to transact our everyday business in the English language, but the tyranny of the foreign tongue has filtered far down and is still upon our young boys as an incubus. For in our colleges and schools the medium of instruction is English; and in the examination hall, too, the medium of expression is English. And there can be no more ridiculous, also no more pitiful spectacle than our young boys helplessly struggling with foreign words and foreign idioms in the compulsory process of learning. Gentlemen, 'woe to the conquered' is a timepolished or crystal formula of political experience of the nations of the 'world. But allow me to tell you that I never more sadly admit its truth than when I see young Indian boys in secondary schools being broken to the yoke of a foreign tongue. I have already told you that I highly value the English language as a second

language. But not all the worth admitted or imaginable of that language can be allowed as an excuse for the dead weight which the tender heart of our young boys is made at present to lift in our Schools and Colleges. There is absolutely no reason why subjects such as history, science, and Sanskrit should be taught in English, or question papers in those subjects should be answered in English. English as a medium of instruction not only leads to an excessive study of English but it needlessly imposes a heavy burden on the mind of the pupil, interferes with the quality of the knowledge of subjects, and unnecessarily prolongs the period of the school or the college studies of the student. Further we must note that it is due to English being a medium of ex-instruction that at the end of their School and College career, we have young men sent out into the world, who are utterly unable to use their mother tongue in speech or writing, and besides being made the objects of social ridicule, are unable to discharge the sacred duty imposed upon them viz. of extending the education they have themselves received to the masses who are for one reason or another debarred from receiving it. Now all this is so obvious that the evil should have been perceived and remedied long ago. But unfortunately we in India have no voice in the administration even of our own educational affairs. We have produced in the past men by dozens who were first class educationists. But not one of them could ever aspire to be the Chancellor of a University or even a Director of Public Instruction. Englishmen, however cultured and well meaning, cannot possibly be expected to feel the same pride for our Vernaculars as we may do and it is for many of them a hard nut to crack to be able even to imagine the havoc that English as a medium of instruction is making in India. But even under these

unfavourable conditions, we have, on record expression of opinion in favour of the Vernaculars being made the medium of instruction, by eminent European scholars and officials who ever chanced to look at the question from a lofty pedestal. If I could command at this moment a copy of the excellent brochure published some years ago by a former Dewan of the Baroda State, I mean Dewan Bahadur Manibhai Jasabhai, I am sure I can read out to you excellent passages after passages in this connection. But perhaps it is now of no use lamenting over the past. The past is beyond our control and beyond mending. Let us cling to the living present and the hopeful future and make the best of them. The experiment of the introduction of the vernaculars as medium of instruction is now for some time past being made at several places. It is in fact the special noteworthy feature of some of the institutions of *national education* that have come into being in different parts of India viz. Calcutta, Talegaon and Baroda. I know also that aided institutions like the Deccan Education Society of Poona are trying the experiment in their own way and are hopeful of excellent results. The difficulty of text-books is of course a real difficulty. But it must be solved according to the operation of the law of demand and supply. But when the necessary initiative has thus been taken by enterprising private pioneer men and institutions in this matter, it certainly behoves our state departments of education and our Universities to come forward and crown with success the good work of the restoration of the vernaculars to their own dignity and usefulness and thus earn the 'blessings' of the generations to come.

(31-10-1909)



## Home Rule League Lecture Series

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen.*

Allow me to thank you sincerely for the trouble you have all taken to attend the meeting this evening. The Committee of the Home-Rule League has decided to hold a series of lectures on the subject of Indian Home-Rule, and it naturally devolves on me, as Secretary of the League, to open the series, which I propose to do with a somewhat formal address. After two or three lectures at Poona, the series will be taken to the mofussil, and some of the prominent members of the League will, it is arranged, then give lectures at their own places; so that while the inconvenience and the trouble of a journey will be saved to the lecturers, the work of the League will be spread, as it should be, in the different parts of the country.

You are all probably aware that the Home Rule League for Bombay and the Maharashtra, including the C. P. and the Berars and the Karnatic, was established at Belgaum on the 28th of April last. It is now about five months since then, and during this interval we have made progress which, under the circumstances of the case, may be regarded as not disappointing. For while the membership of the League now comes to about 650, we have received rupees 2,200 as either subscriptions or donations. The League is, I might say, as yet feeling its way. I need not enter into the reasons of this caution as they are almost self-evident. The attitude of the Government towards the League and its activity is yet not very clearly defined. But I am glad to point out that Counsel for the Prosecution, in the recent proceedings against Mr. Tilak under Chapter VIII of the Cri. Pro. Code, open-

ly made a declaration to the following effect as reported in the *Times of India* of 12th August last.

"Mr. Binning said they were not there that day because Mr. Tilak had advocated any particular scheme of Home Rule but they were there because of the way in which he had advocated it. As he said before, the complaint against Mr. Tilak was that in advocating Home Rule he said things which were quite unpardonable. There was nothing like a tangible scheme of Home Rule suggested in the speeches. Counsel said he had nothing to say about the merits of the Home Rule question. It was natural that the inhabitants of a country should desire and strive for powers to govern their country themselves."

Now you will recognise that that is perhaps as far as official ventriloquism can even go in tolerating, if not favouring, any political movement. And though the wisdom or the justice of the proceedings against Mr. Tilak is by no means clear, yet all Home Rulers in this Province must thankfully acknowledge that the Government have no mistake about treating a Home Rule Movement as perfectly legal *per se*.

As for the non-official world, there has been so far no active opposition from it to the League from any quarter. Some of the papers in Bombay and the Deccan have indeed tried to offer some hostile criticism of a separate organisation like the League, in view of the existence of the official or non-official Congress bodies. But the criticism was feeble and never consistently pursued. The reason, in my opinion, is obvious; the critics are themselves conscious of the fact that the Congress bodies do not undertake the work of the propagandism of Home Rule, and that there can be no valid objection to the work itself though done by other bodies. On the other hand the

objectors themselves have felt the necessity of writing and speaking with frequency and force on the subject of Self-Government for India which is only another name for Home Rule. The Congress itself has neither specifically authorised the one nor forbidden the other form of advocacy, of the one national cause which is now uppermost in the mind of every thoughtful and patriotic Indian, be he pleased to style and call himself by any party designation. And so long as the Congress itself does not organise an active Self-Government propaganda of its own, the presumed authority of the Congress to do that work to any constituent of the Congress must follow as a logical consequence.

I must also say a word about the attitude, towards the Maharashtra Home Rule League, of persons who, though they themselves favoured the idea of one or more Leagues in India, have not till recently made up their mind as to their exact *modus operandi*. Thus Mrs. Besant has been a most enthusiastic and forceful advocate of the idea of a League. And yet she could not for a long time make up her mind as to actually starting a league, because she wanted some of the foremost Moderate Congressmen to join it when actually started. But her first disappointment came when at the meeting of some specially invited Congressmen at Bombay in the last week of December, she had to actually withdraw the proposition for the discussion of which the meeting was called. She had, however, hopes that the Bombay Congress itself might vicariously make amends by sanctioning an active and organised Self-Government propaganda. Well, the Congress did appoint a Committee for this purpose; but it is needless to say that that Committee actually did no propagandist work, when we know that it met only once in nine months and it did not even finally formulate, till

now, the scheme of Self-Government which was entrusted to it. After waiting long anxiously for a sign from the official Congress bodies, Mrs. Besant at last resolved to wait no longer; and accordingly on the 3rd of September the Madras League was formally constituted by her at Madras with a net-work of branch Leagues in the mofussil to support it and carry out the work of political education among the people. Mrs. Besant has also established a branch of the League in London itself; and judging by some of the press-cuttings the work of that branch is being pushed forward among Englishmen in England with earnestness. As regards co-operation between the different Home Rule Leagues in India, you will remember that, though the League established at Belgaum was intended for Bombay, the Maharashtra and the Karnatic only, yet the idea was clearly adverted to, even at the time, of co-operation with other Leagues if any be started in any other part of India. And accordingly, the Poona League, if I may call the League for Bombay, the Maharashtra and the Karnatic by that name for the sake of brevity, the Poona League and the Madras League have been co-operating with the greatest good-will. In January last it was suggested to Mrs. Besant that the territorial divisions for the Leagues should be made on the principle of language; and she very willingly accepted the suggestion. An understanding has been made that each League should as far as possible work for its own linguistic Province. Indeed it will be possible to point out a few Maharashtrians who are members of the Madras League and also a few non-Maharashtrians who are members of the Poona League. But whatever the individual preference, the energy and influence of the members of one League are readily available for the furtherance of the work of another League, if needed by considerations of the ties of

language and connection. In this respect let me quote one or two sentences from Mrs. Besant's letter to me dated 18th June. Referring to this very question of co-operation she says:—"I think that any worker should be left free to work for both Leagues. The object is the same and we shall work together. If one man works for both, it shows friendliness."

And now at the meeting of the Madras League dated the 3rd inst., a resolution has been passed embodying the desire and the intention of the Madras League to co-operate with the Maharashtra League. Further, had it not been for the injunction served on Mrs. Besant against entering the Bombay Presidency, we might have had the pleasure of having her as one of the lecturers in the series opened to-day. But as you are all aware, Mrs. Besant was already here in May last, and that one of the two lectures, delivered by her in Poona at the time, was upon the subject of Home Rule itself. The series was, therefore, practically if not formally, opened by her four months ago; and though Mrs. Besant cannot now enter this province, she may perhaps even now be present with us in spirit and later on in a written address for this series which some one may have the privilege to read for her.

With these prefatory remarks relating to the progress of the work of our League, I will now, with your permission, proceed to say something about the Home Rule movement in general. It was Edmund Burke who said "Unsettled questions have no pity for the repose of Nations." And these wise words give, in my opinion, a satisfactory reply to the objection that the present is not a suitable time for bringing forward such a question as Home Rule for discussion. Government may well claim repose after their labours of administration for a century. But it is

precisely there that the activity of the Indian nation begins. It is no paradox to say that it is the success itself of the energetic administration of the British rulers of India for a century that makes the movement of Home Rule possible, and the Rulers ought not surely to turn their faces from the glorious aftermath. The phrase *Home Rule movement* may be a new one as applied to the national movement in India. But the essential idea has been there all along, though it may have been variously expressed. For what else can Mr. Dadabhai Navroji have meant when he pleaded parently for the admission of the Indian people to the Civil Service or be in the mind of the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale when he enunciated the ideal of India to be self-government similar to that obtaining in the self-governing Colonies? In Ireland itself the term Home Rule was not taken up till after a course of nearly seventy years of agitation of the Nationalist movement. After seventy years of the Dublin Castle Government, Ireland was still fluctuating between two opposite policies viz. Union and Separation. Union had been tried at all cost to Ireland and had failed; Separation, though not tried actually, was yet sought after, also at all cost to Ireland and that attempt also had failed. And it was the forensic genius of Isaac Butt that invented or rather discovered the policy and the phrase of Home Rule, which while it made for unity, 'cut asunder a chain of slavery and allowed independence without provoking separation.' As Union was a great wrong, the early leaders of the Irish Nationalist movement could naturally think of no other watch-word than Repeal of the Union as the most direct opposite of Union. But Isaac Butt, while he wanted to mould the future could not change the past. So he invented the phrase 'Home Rule' which happily 'neither reversed the past

Englishman from all the imaginary terrors which the Swadeshi word Swarajya is likely to conjure up in his mind.

Well, apart from the name of the political ideal, the real problem whether in Ireland or in India is nearly the same. In both cases the people want a National Legislative assembly with an executive subordinate and responsible to that assembly. In both cases the British Crown retains the same supremely elevated place as the head of the constitution. The proximity of Ireland to England may or may not render the presence of a Viceroy unnecessary in Ireland. But following the example of Canada and Australia, rather than that of Ireland, India will certainly want a Viceroy as a responsible representative of the Crown on the spot, especially as, unlike Ireland, the Parliament would be more like a federated than a national Parliament. Unlike Ireland also, the presence of Indian members in the British Parliament is not a vexed question in the case of India. But the actual details of an Indian Home Rule scheme need not be discussed at this stage, because the details can be filled in after the principle is admitted. The details of the three or four Irish Home Rule Bills that were introduced in the British Parliament within 25 years were materially different from one another; though in the first two cases Mr. Gladstone himself was the author, and of the two latter the author was a disciple of Mr. Gladstone, I mean Mr. Asquith. I advert to this aspect of the question of details of an Indian Home Rule Scheme simply because the want of a cut and dried scheme is in some quarters treated as showing the want of *bona fides* of those who agitate in India in the name of Home Rule in general.

The question of Home Rule has to be solved not here in India but in England. The object of the League

is to obtain Home Rule within the British Empire and Home Rule can be an accomplished fact only when the British Parliament grants it by an Act of Parliament. Thus it will be clearly seen that we shall have to carry our agitation directly into the heart of British democracy which alone can bring effective pressure to bear upon the Parliament. The League has before it great up-hill work and one of the steps proposed to be taken by the League is to exercise the popular right of petitioning the House of Commons at the Bar through its chosen representatives, and ask them to pass an Act granting Home Rule to India. The petition will embody all our demands in the form of a bill to be moved in the Parliament.

As for the main idea of Home Rule, however, it is, as I have already said, the same whether in India or Ireland or the Colonies. Readers of history, whether they be officials or non-officials, will not fail to inwardly mark that we are now in respect of that demand nearly in the same position relatively to Ireland, as Ireland was once in relation to Canada of the early years of the 19th century. Our claim is neither spurious nor untenable, simply because we happen to make it in the early years of the 20th century.

British authorities in India now speak about Indian Home Rule much in the same way as the Dublin Castle authorities spoke a few years ago about Irish Home Rule or the Duke of Wellington spoke about the Canadian Home Rule in the thirties of the last century viz. that responsible Government was incompatible with the sovereignty of Great Britain. It is also supposed that the existence of a variety of races or communities in a country make it *unfit for responsible Self-Government*. But while that fallacy has been proved in the case of Canada, and is on the point of being proved in the case of Ireland, it will



be similarly proved in the case of India when the time comes for it.

Gentlemen, you are already familiar enough with the case of Ireland. I will, therefore, just for the sake of variety and novelty, tell you something about the case of Canada. I have not forgotten Lord Morley's dictum that the fur-coat of frigid Canada cannot suit tropical India. But I cannot treat it as anything more serious than a *humor*, having known that some things solemnly declared by his Lordship as settled facts were, alas, soon unsettled.

The dominions of Canada, as you know, passed into the hands of Britain in 1760. For some time after the country remained under military rule. In 1763 a proclamation was issued by the British Government by which civil government was introduced into Canada. The history of Canada for the next nearly 50 years was marked by failures, failures of the authorities to administer law and justice, and failure on the part of the French Canadian and English subjects to appreciate the blessings of British rule. There were, moreover, apparently the same difficulties in Canada in the way of unity between the different classes of subjects, as were supposed to be in existence in Ireland on account of enmity between the Catholics and Protestants, or are now supposed to exist in India on account of the religious differences between Hindus and Mahomedans etc. That the Colonists themselves in Canada took a gloomy view of union being established between the upper and the lower Canadians will be obvious from the following passage in the petition of the upper Canadians presented to the House of Commons in 1822. It runs thus :—

"Your petitioners are of opinion that the different origins of the population of the two Provinces, the difference of their languages, habits, manners, customs and re-

ligions, together with their varied interests, will necessarily produce efforts for ascendancy, create jealousies, strifes, animosities and contentions which may break out in consequences of an alarming nature, and all without answering any one desirable object with which we can foresee or that may balance the least of the evils that appear to us so obvious."

In his famous report on the Canadian situation Lord Durham also has borne testimony to the same feature of the situation *viz.* general antipathy between the French Canadians and the British. He says: "The hatred of races is not publicly avowed on either side and yet all the British are on one side, and all the Canadians on the other. What may be the immediate subject of dispute seems to be of no consequence; so surely as there is a dispute on any subject the great bulk of the Canadians and the great bulk of the British appear ranged against each other. The mutual dislike of the two classes extends beyond politics into social life, where all intercourse is confined to persons of the same origin."

And yet within a few years of the gift of a constitution of Self-Government the racial animosity disappeared; and a *united* Canada has been able, it is said, to settle racial, educational and religious questions, some of which still perplex the British Isles. Canada is to-day a tower of strength to the Empire—a solid block of nearly two million French-speaking subjects of His Majesty living under a code of laws which are largely French. It should not be supposed that the settlement of Canada was without its troubles, or that the Canadians, either French or British, did not display at one time or another even rebellious tendencies. For no people in the world, however loyal in the main, were for ever free from temporary outbursts of temper which are mistaken for

sedition. There is a limit beyond which human patience and wrong-bearing cannot go; and in the history of Canada we find nationalists driven to raise the standard of revolt, or seeking separation from England and union with rebel America. But a timely touch of generous political reform always had a pacifying effect, because there was in the heart of these nationalists no irrevocable ill-will to British rule. On the other hand the Canadian loyalists, though they fought for British connection, believed in the right of the Colonies to manage their local affairs and demanded that their representatives should share in the government of the country. The Home Government accordingly granted Canada a constitution by the Act of 1791 known as the Constitutional Act. The constitution was soon found to be unsatisfactory, because the Governor was responsible to the Colonial Office which ruled without any knowledge of Canada and Canadian conditions. Canadian dislike of the Colonial Office rule, though hushed during the war between England and the United States, burst out into flame as soon as the Colonists had peace and leisure to look into their own affairs. The Governor took his advice from a Council which was not at all responsible to the people; and Louis Joseph Papineau, a great Canadian orator and patriot, was driven to revolt. Papineau, the rebel of French Canada, had his counterpart in William Lyon Mackenzie of British Canada. The demand in both parts of the Colony was in effect for a council responsible to the Legislative assembly. The advocates of this reform, though loyal to the core, were branded as seditionists; and the opening of the reign of Queen Victoria was marked by most severe discontent and even bloodshed. The rebellions of Papineau and Mackenzie had, (as says Professor Pollard in his book

on the British Empire,) at least the merit of making the British Government feel that something must be done. Lord Durham was accordingly deputed to Canada as a High Commissioner ; and the remedy suggested by that great statesman for improving the condition of Canada was nothing else than responsible Government; *i.e.* Government by a Council of Ministers who only carried out the work authorised by the Legislature and remained in office only so long as they possessed the confidence of a majority of the Legislative assembly.

In this connection I would give you a quotation from one of the letters written to Lord John Russell by Joseph Howe, a Canadian patriot, and a leader of Nova Scotia. It appears that Lord John Russell had objected to the executive responsibility of the Council on the ground that rebels like Papineau and Mackenzie would have been ministers in the respective Provinces they disturbed. Now in the first place there is apparently no harm if a judicious political reform converted a rebel into a loyal minister of the Crown, because it is only so much gain to the Crown itself. And is not the proposition proved by the example of General Botha who, after fighting *with* the British for the sake of national independence, is now fighting *for* the British and conquering territories for the Empire from the Germans? The case again is in point of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy who was first the editor of a Nationalist paper, then a rebel and lastly a successful Minister of the Crown in a Southern Colony. Well, speaking for the Canadian rebels Joseph Howe says that the rebels would not have been rebels if the Canadians were invested with the responsibility of Self-Government. He tells Lord John Russell that if Ireland had justice instead of having it to seek, there would not have been such a political phenomenon as the great agitator Daniel O'Connell, to challenge the

admiration of the world, and to smite the oppressors with dismay. And pressing the matter nearer home he says:—"You well known, my Lord, that rebels have become exceedingly scarce at home since the system of letting the majority govern has become firmly established, and yet they were as plenty as black-berries in the good old days when the sovereigns contended that they only were responsible. Turn back and you will find that they began to disappear altogether in England about 1688 and that every political change which makes the executive more completely responsible to the Legislature, and the Legislature, to the country at large, renders the prospects of a new growth of rebels small by degrees and beautifully less. And yet who can assure us that, if the sovereigns had continued as of old alone responsible, Chatham and Fox, instead of being able ministers might not have been sturdy rebels?" Mr. Howe goes further and says to Lord John Russell, "Who can say that even your Lordship, possessed of the strong attachment to liberty which distinguishes your family might not, despairing of all good government under such a system, instead of using your influence to extend by peaceful improvements the happiness of the people, be at this moment in the field at their head, and struggling sword in hand, to abate the power of the Crown? So long as the principle of irresponsibility was maintained in Scotland, and the Viceroy and a few Bishops and Courtiers engrossed the administration, there were such men as Hume and Lindsay, and such things as assemblies in Glasgow, general tables in Edinburg and armed men in every part of that noble country, weakening the government and resisting the power of the Crown."

As regards the effect of Self-Government upon the political fusion of different races and communities I may

also point out the example of South Africa. For we are all aware that South Africa is now united, and the British, the Boers, the Afrianders, the Uitlanders have now all thrown in their lot with the new constitution. Of this constitution Sir Percy Fitzpatrick has said that it is the finest constitution in the world. But what General Smuts said of it is more to the point. General Smuts in the course of a speech at Pretoria remarked that to him much more wonderful than the constitution itself were the signatures at the end of it. And General Smuts was right. For to quote from Brand's 'Union of South Africa,' "What would President Kruger have said in 1899 if he had been told that in less than seven years after the complete destruction of the Republics and their annexation to the British Empire, a constitution embodying all that the Uitlanders had struggled for would have been enthusiastically accepted by all parties and races in South Africa? Would he have believed his eyes had he seen appended to that document, side by side, the names of Dr. Jameson, who raided the independent Republic of Transvaal in order to overthrow its Government and General Botha, who, then a leading citizen of that Republic, is said to have demanded that Dr. Jameson should be shot as a freebooter?"

Gentlemen, the question of Home Rule has been so often argued in other times and in other places that it is perhaps unnecessary for us in India to argue it over again. The verdict of not only human nature but also actual history is in our favour. The appeal to human nature leads to obvious platitudes which I would like to avoid on the present occasion. But the testimony of history has an irresistibly practical aspect; and I would content myself with stating the case for Home Rule in the words of a constitutional jurist, I mean Professor Dicey, who though

a non-Home-Ruler, had at least the gift of fairly stating his opponents' case. In his book called "England's Case against Irish Home Rule," Prof. Dicey says —

Home Rule under one shape or another has been tried in a large number of foreign countries and has been, (of course according to the Home Ruler) found everywhere to solve the problem of combining into one State communities, which were not ready to coalesce into one united nation. Each State throughout the American Union, each Canton in Switzerland, has something like sovereign independence. Yet the United States are strong and prosperous, and the Swiss Confederacy which was at one time torn by religious animosities and divided by differences of race is now a country so completely at harmony with itself that without a regular army it maintains its independence in the face of the armed powers of Europe. Canada or Victoria have more complete liberty of action than any one dreams of claiming for Ireland. Yet Canada and Victoria are loyal and under the guidance of men who, it may be, were yesterday rebels in Ireland, support the supremacy of the British Parliament and contribute to the splendour of the English Crown. The German Empire contains not only separate States but separate Kingdoms such as Bavaria, ruled by Kings and Princes who certainly value very highly the independence of their countries and the dignity of their thrones. The despotism of Turkey has not forbidden the local independence of Crete; and Self-Government has produced acquiescence in Turkish rule. The autocracy of the Czar is found compatible with Home Rule in Finland and Finland is the most contented portion of Russia. Norway and Sweden are united in feeling because they are not by law a united Kingdom; and act in harmony just because each country has a different constitution and each is governed by its own

Parliament. Denmark has with benefit to herself, given local independence to Iceland and Iceland is content. Austria and Hungary, after centuries of misunderstanding and twenty years of bitter conflict, have finally composed the feud of ages by a compromise, which gives to the two parts of the empire the practical blessings of Parliamentary independence and concedes to Hungary at least the sentimental blessing of acknowledged nationality. The argument from foreign experience is thus an induction based upon a foundation of instances as large as can support any conclusion of social science. In one land after another the existence of Home Rule in one part of the State, has been found consistent with the unity of the whole." I will only add that when Professor Dicey wrote he could not dream that united South Africa might as well be added to the above long list of nations enjoying Self-Government without endangering the strength or the prosperity of empires in which they were included.

England might have, as Prof. Seely has said, acquired the empire in a fit of absent-mindedness or even somnambulance. But England must have been very much awake indeed when during the present war it readily grasped every bit of assistance from every corner of that empire which is spread over the four continents of the globe. England's effort should now be, therefore, to preserve and cherish that empire, and the only way by which she can do so is to grant each constituent part of that Empire Home Rule or National Independence. It is recorded that Lord Rosebury while discussing the problem of Imperial Federation with a friend once said, "*I sometimes think that nothing but a great war will ever federate this empire.*" I wonder if Lord Rosebury was in a prophetic trance when he uttered these words: and I also wonder if the present war be the great war that is to bring about the



fulfilment of that prophecy. But if that be so, England cannot, I maintain, leave India in the lurch and eject her, as a foreign body, in the process of imperial crystallisation. England dare not treat India as a foreign body—in relation to a federated empire after this war. The *Montreal Star*, a Canadian paper, recently observed "The men who die with us in defence of a common flag should not be kept waiting for a moment in the anti-chambers of our Councils." "No empire can stand except on the bed-rock principle of the moral identity of each of its constituents.

(21-9-1916)

## Shivaji Coronation Anniversary

(*Prof. Rawlinson's 'Life of Shivaji'*)

On Thursday the 15th inst., Mr N. C. Kelkar delivered a lecture on the above subject under the presidency of Mr. G. S. Khaparde, in the course of which he said:—Prof. Rawlinson found fault with European writers for speaking of Shivaji in unmeasured words of condemnation and also disapproved of Mr. Ranade's 'Rise of the Maratha Power' as speaking too highly of Shivaji. The Professor professed to take the medium course. It was undeniable that the Professor was not so hopeless a slave of prejudices as other European writers about Shivaji proved themselves to be. The Professor indeed describes Shivaji faithfully in some respects. Shivaji was inspired by noble ambition in founding Swarajya, he showed sound statesmanship in his relations with Vijapurkars and the Mughals, he was actuated all along by truly religious motives even under temptations, his administration of the territory he conquered was the best possible: these and

some other facts were admitted by the Professor. But there were still many defects in his treatment of the subject. The Professor blamed Shivaji for taking advantage of the weakness of the Vijapurkars and of the absence of Mughal Sardars from the Deccan. He saw covetousness in Shivaji's subjugation of Konkan. He saw injustice and imprudence in Shivaji's conquest of the Karnatic. The lecturer pointed out that Shivaji's subjugation of Konkan and of the territory of Vijapurkars and Mughals was absolutely uncensurable and even meritorious, as to take advantage of an enemy's weakness or absence in the promotion of his schemes was Shivaji's political virtue. As regards Karnatic the charge of injustice could not be supported, because the motive of Shivaji in demanding his share of the Karnatic *iqgir* was pure. His brother had befriended the enemy of the Marathas. To allow the enemy to scheme in a territory, a share of which rightly belonged to Shivaji, would have been a serious blunder on the part of the latter. Shivaji, therefore, did right in asking his undutiful brother to hand over to himself his proper share. As regards the charge of imprudence, readers of history would absolve Shivaji of it altogether. They knew that Rajaram found Jinji in the Karnatic a very valuable retreat in times when, after the assassination of Sambhaji, nearly the whole of Maharashtra fell into Mussulman hands. It was Jinji that afforded the Maratha King a safe retreat and was thus useful in establishing Maratha rule in Maharashtra. The lecturer next took up the point of the 'trances' of Shivaji. The lecturer believed that Shivaji most probably did nothing more than utter on occasions certain expressions which men with self-confidence and a consciousness of a Mission are apt to utter. Napoleon's words on the occasion when he became First Consul, Cæsar's remark to the boat-

men when they were frightened by the stormy sea, William of Orange's talk with the messenger who was surprised to see William safe while a storm of bullets was raging all around him, were recorded in history. These great men expressed themselves to the effect that God was with them and took care of them. Similarly did Shivaji speak of Bhavani favouring him with inspiration and protection. These natural expressions of Shivaji were transformed by persons of a morbidly religious turn of mind into stories of 'trances' and thus 'trances' appeared in *bakhare* and elsewhere in the story of Shivaji. That was, according to the lecturer, what probably happened. It was assumed by some writers that Shivaji falsely spoke to the people around him of his 'trances' in order to gain adherents and to have great power over their minds. But that assumption was unwarrantable. Shivaji did not avoid meeting dangers personally. He did not ask any of his followers to risk their lives where he would not risk his own. His personal bravery, chivalry and other laudable traits were a sufficient attraction. Lying about 'trances' was a meanness his religious temperament was incapable of, and such lying was absolutely unnecessary for a man of Shivaji's merit. The lecturer also maintained that Shivaji could not be called fanatical or superstitious. The lecturer next turned to Prof. Rawlinson's remarks in connection with the system of administration adopted by Shivaji. Prof. Rawlinson remarked that ever since the time of the Mauryas the bureaucratic system was the one which was employed in the administration of the country. Shivaji had his bureaucracy. Prof. Rawlinson was, therefore, at a loss to know why Indians decried the system to-day. The lecturer said he would be satisfied if the bureaucracy of Shivaji or other *Indian* administration of old were copied by the present Government. Those bureaucracies were

*Indian, manned wholly and solely by Indians.* If such a bureaucracy were granted to India, it would be a forward step without doubt. The lecturer next took up the remark of Prof. Rawlinson that 'Shivaji was brave and chivalrous according to the standards of his age and nation,' and that *twentieth century western standards* ought not to be applied in his case. Would Shivaji's brave and chivalrous deeds be adjudged cowardly and unchivalrous to-day? Prof. Rawlinson remarked that Shivaji's society was dark and violent and corrupt and hence Shivaji was not specially to blame. The lecturer read out quotations from Smollet's history and Macaulay's history of England describing contemporary Englishmen as temperamentally violent. Drake and Raleigh were described in some books as pirates. A quotation from the *Illusions of New India* was read out comparing educational and criminal statistics of Bengal with those of England about the year 1882. England showed 30 times more criminality than Bengal while in education the latter was far behind the former. An extract from Lecky's history relating to the story of the Irish Union of 1800 shewed that that Union was brought about by wholesale bribery. The lecturer pointed out that even to-day one half of Europe was describing the other half as barbarous, violent, corrupt etc., etc.; all which proved that to talk of *western standards and twentieth century standards*, as if they were something irreproachable and unapproachable was unwarrantable. The lecturer maintained that violence was no part of Shivaji's character, and bribing *Killedars* was perhaps a humane method of promoting *Swarajya* schemes.

(25-6-1917)

## Speech at Taunton

The British Parliament could make or unmake laws for India, and, therefore, the British democracy which elected the British Parliament were as much responsible for the misgovernment of India as the King. They were, in fact, the imperial rulers of India, yet Parliamentary responsibility for the government of India was an absolute farce. How could members of Parliament represent the millions of India who had not elected them, and lived six thousand miles away? Was it not time for them to abdicate their authority and allow the people to govern themselves through their own elected representatives? The Irish people were demanding Home Rule; there was a Home Rule movement in Scotland, and English people wanted Home Rule for themselves (hear, hear). English people might think that the Central Government of India was responsible for the administration of the country, but that was not so, because the Central Government could be overruled by the Secretary of State. Who then really governed India? Not Parliament, not the Crown, not the Viceroy, but three powers behind the Throne, upon whom responsibility could not be fixed. The first of these powers was the military—the Commander-in-Chief. In all the aggressive wars waged by England in the name of imperialism Indian troops had been used. It was false to say that 2,00,000 or 3,00,000 troops were required in India to preserve the peace. Let anyone say in India one word against the military despot, and he was immediately put into jail. Secondly, there was the civilian master, who, as the Chairman has truly said, was neither an Indian, nor civil, nor a servant. He answered the same description as the

"Holy Roman Empire," which was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire (laughter). The third power behind the throne in India was the British capitalist, who was the first obliging gentleman to establish connexion between the East and the West. When he first came he was most polite and flattering to the native rulers, and but for him the British Empire would not have been established in India. If he were to go into the history of the East India Company's operations he (Mr. Kelkar) would have to say something that would be unutterable in India, and that would curdle their blood in England. The Indian rebellion was the people's protest against the past misdeeds of this British Company. Since the British Government took over control there had been no more thumb-cutting but in the name of Free Trade the native industries were gradually strangled. To-day the British capitalist was spreading his nets wider, and setting up factories in India because labour was so cheap there. He was finding that it paid very much better to take his manufacturing to the land of the raw material rather than keep it in England, where the cost of working was many times higher, apart from the expense of freightage to this country. The British merchants in India were opposed to self-government because it might cripple their power of exploiting the people.

Answering the objection that the masses of the people of India were not capable of being efficient voters, Mr. Kelkar told the audience that when their ancestors were wearing skins and hunting in the great forests of England his people were highly civilised and had built temples of culture and literature. Let them compare, on the plane of civilisation, the nationalities of Central Europe, for the liberty of which the Great War had been fought, with the position of India; and India need not fear the compari-

son. But India did not ask England to take up arms and fight for her liberty as other peoples had done; she merely asked British democracy to give their votes for Indian Self-government. India had been given a place in the League of Nations, along with Canada, South Africa, and Australia. The League of Nations was claimed to be a *great world federation of free peoples*, but without Self-government India could have no place in that scheme. If India was to have a voice in the League of Nations, she must be placed on the same footings as other self-governing British dominions. (Applause)—*Indiv.*

{ 30-11-1919 }

### The Industrial Problem in India ✓

The following paper was read by Mr. N. C. Kelkar, member of the Congress Deputation, before the Conference on India on October 4.—

I have been asked to say a few words on the subject of the "Industrial Problem in India." The time at my disposal is necessarily limited, and I should, therefore, content myself with dealing with only one or two points of the problem which appear to me to be very important. I will frankly admit that I am not a close student of economics. But the truths underlying the Indian industrial problem are so obvious that nothing more than the common sense of an uninitiated layman is required to perceive them.

The bed-rock of the industrial position in India is poverty. To avoid controversy, however, in this matter, I will only rely on the utterances of the officials themselves. The annual income of an average Indian does not

exceed two pounds, as calculated by Lord Curzon himself. "Of poverty, misery, and destitution there is abundance in India," said his Lordship in his Budget speech in 1901. It may, however, be argued that the law of averages is a misleading guide, and that this average of two pounds proves not the poverty of India but the unequal distribution of wealth among the different classes of the Indian people. The reply to this argument is found to be in the 135th para of the Joint Report of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, which says that the number of persons enjoying a substantial income in India is very small. "In one Province the total number of persons who enjoyed an income of £66 a year was only 30,000; in another Province, 20,000. It is evident," to quote the words of the report, "that the curve of wealth descends very steeply and that enormous masses of the population have little to spare for more than the necessities of life." The poor in India are very poor, of course, but even the rich are not very rich, and not many of them rich enough.

That, in brief, is the present condition. But all knowledge is the result of comparison and contrast; and as against this gloomy picture of poverty, let us recall the pleasant picture of Indian wealth and prosperity in pre-British days as painted by the Englishmen themselves.

Says Thornton in his "Description of Ancient India,"—"Ere yet the Pyramids looked down upon the valley of the Nile, when Greece and Italy, those cradles of European civilisation, nursed only the tenants of a wilderness, India was the seat of wealth and grandeur. A busy population had covered the land with the marks of its industry; rich crops of the most coveted productions of Nature annually rewarded the toil of husbandmen; skilful artisans converted the rude produce of the soil into fabrics of unrivalled delicacy and beauty; and architects and



sculptors joined in constructing works, the solidity of which has not, in some instances, been overcome by the evolution of thousands of years . . . The ancient state of India must have been one of extraordinary magnificence "

The question, therefore, naturally arises, what is it that has brought this great change ? Who is responsible for this economic degradation of India ? Can it be that Indian people themselves have wrought their ruin apart from their political condition ? No, we find it nowhere alleged and proved that the advent of the British in India saw a decline already dead set in the physical, mental or moral constitution of the Indian people, so that they might forget their commercial traditions, unlearn their skill in crafts and industries, become suddenly insensible to economic impulses and ambitions and thus deservedly *forfeit their material prosperity*.

The evidence, on the other hand, is quite clear that the economic degradation of India is both directly as well as indirectly traceable to the economic policy of the British rulers . I do not want to weary you with a catalogue of the sins of commission of the East India Company in this respect, as those of you who have read Dadabhai's and Mr Ramesh Dutt's books must be acquainted with that melancholy chapter in the history of British rule in India. The East India Company is happily no more. The last of the Company's fat annuitants, let us believe, has passed away like the last of the tall 'Mutiny veterans. Let oblivion bury its dead. The past is past and could not be recalled : let us, therefore, cling to the living present and also try to visualise future prospects. But do we really perceive here a change for the better ? Has the displacement of the East India Company by the Crown and the Parliament made any material difference in the condition of things ?

Has the *mentality* of the rulers as *economic* exploiters altered appreciably ? Let us answer the question without mining matters. To my mind, we in India are in that respect as we were under the East India Company, or even worse. It is true that the savagery of the methods of the East India Company will necessarily be toned down, and we shall no more hear of the cutting of fingers or thumbs of skilful Indian artisans for fear that they may manufacture equally precious goods for a rival nation. But the change will not be really more significant in the *essentials* of the economic character of the British rule than the time-wrought change from the uncouth, romantic, muffled, long coat of the 17th century English merchant to the trim, matter-of-fact tweed suit of his present-day prototype. The reason is simply that manners change, but men seldom, if ever. And British merchants will be British merchants all the same, whether the flag follows trade as it did in India before or the trade now follows the flag there, as it does also in some other parts of the British Empire. It is difficult to say which comes on the scene first, indisputably, anywhere, and is the real author of the original sin. But it is true, nevertheless, that the flag and trade follow each other in endless succession in a vicious circle. They act and react upon each other with equal force; and both act with full conjoint vigour upon people in the area which happens to be the scene of their friendly game of hide and seek.

From an economic point of view the period of the 150 years of the British rule in India may be divided into two eras. One, the era of ruin; and the other, the era of restfulness. In the first era we see the British ruler in India aggressive and militant in spirit and crude in his methods but then he had frankness of manners in his doings. He imposed unconscionably high import duties in England

upon Indian manufacturers and even practised social boycott of his fellows for the sin of wearing foreign wares. But he knew what he was doing and he owned the deed. In the succeeding era the ruin of India's manufactures had been complete and it was convenient and profitable for the British economic man to preach and practise Free Trade. *Liberty* was the word. There was a charming smoothness about the manner in which England did her work of exploitation in India during the 19th century. Freedom was there for India—yes, to mind her agricultural toil and the development of her love of foreign manufactures. Freedom was there for England—yes, from the competition of the Indian manufacturers, and the development of home manufactures with the help of machinery. Does not good old England exhibit a divine love of restfulness and profound respect for the *status quo*?—yes, when she has had her own fill and her digestive organs refuse to accept more for the moment. Who can be more amiable than the lion when, with his hunger appeased for the day and with something in reserve for to-morrow as protectorates under his royal paws, he dozes in all innocence in a cool cavern of the mountain?

Well, the effects of the economic policy of England in India in this period were not obtrusive, but none the less sure and certain. They were described by a master mind in a masterly manner. The late Mr. Justice Ranade observes in his work on Indian Political Economy as follows; "The political domination of one country by another attracts far more attention than the more formidable though unfelt domination which the capital, enterprise, and skill of one country exercises over the trade and manufactures of another. This latter domination has an insidious influence which paralyses the springs of the various activities which together make up the life of a nation."

Happily, the authors of the joint Report frankly admit the truth of these words; and I can thus clinch one more point about the industrial problem of India with official support for my argument. The word 'domination' is writ so large that even he who runs may read it on the face of the economic position in India. Take agricultural improvement. The ruler merchant pays greater attention to the improvement of cotton than food grains because Lancashire wants to be independent of America if possible. Here is an extract from the report of the Indian Cotton Committee which was issued a few weeks ago. "It is obvious that the Lancashire cotton industry, the importance of which *to the Empire* requires no comment from us, is faced with a serious situation and that it is desirable that it should cease to be almost dependent on a source of supply the future of which is so problematical." Take mining. The mines are being worked largely by foreign capitalist, and precious ore is being removed from India without adequate return. The banking trade is almost exclusively in the hands of Europeans; so is all import and export business. The exchange pulsates exclusively to the varying economic impulse of the foreigner. And Government would intervene only to protect the home people. One could go on for ever illustrating the great and the little matters in which, as Mr. Ranade said, foreign domination is dominating the whole economic life of India.

But the real danger lies ahead. The restful British economic lion is again feeling hungry, and is being roused by foreign competition, the era of Free Trade having spent itself. Further Imperialism is having its bounds enlarged. Lord Curzon wants one solid block of Empire from China to Canada. In the days of the East India Company there was perhaps only one Leadenhall Street in London, whose occupants Chatham described as "Asia-

tic plunderers." Now there are many such in all England. And India's economic dependence will increase with the needs of the Empire. The old cross-purposes as between the East India Company and the British Government were a sort of guarantee against iniquitous monopolies. Now that the Government have openly identified themselves with the trade interests, not in the name of one company or class as before, but in the name of the whole Empire that guarantee is gone. And India may as well be prepared for another era of aggressive campaign of economic exploitation under the flag of a new economic shibboleth like Imperial Preference. The idea of a pan-Britannic world-wide Empire is abroad. The cult of the Imperialist whom the late Mr. Chamberlain typified in his person, hopes to fashion an Imperial mantle for the old Mother Country out of the odds and ends of humanity—monarchies and federated republics, self-governing states and vassal colonies, free people and subject multitudes—so that, by a slender but infrangible thread, the English will should at all hours of the day pass from one to the other and English force be displayed in its might throughout the length and breadth of the world. In the words of a French critic, who, of course, wrote before the war, "the Imperialist holds out to British merchant manufacturers, to great companies, chambers of commerce and shipping, in other words to the England of iron, coal and textiles, hunted from the old European countries by Protection, harassed in the Oriental countries by competition of Germans, Belgians, Japanese, and Hindus, dissatisfied with the present and anxious for the future—to all these the Imperialist holds out the promise of an Empire organised on the lines of a Customs union where Anglo-Saxon productions alone will find a free market, from which foreign merchandise shall be excluded by a system of differential duties or even, if

necessary, a protective tariff. The Empire, thus constituted will form a gigantic co-operative society of production and consumption, out of which, however, England will derive the lion's share of advantage."

Is there hope for India in all this? Not unless a miracle happens! But even miracles come to pass by prayer and devotion, reinforced by human exertion. How can one say which is more difficult for India to obtain, political self-government or real fiscal autonomy? The Imperialist loves political power and economic domination with equal avidity and strength. In the idea of Imperialism the two are indissoluble and undistinguishable. They are two facets of the same precious stone of selfishness. The Imperialistic flag is woven very much like a purse. Intended to contain pounds and pennies, it can be waved at will like an emblem of prestige, an incitement to invasion. But even as between the two, Imperialism would, I suspect, stand in the future more as an economic device than anything else. The Empire stood hitherto for glory, hereafter it may be proclaimed as a necessary condition of existence. Idle sentimentalism is rapidly vanishing from this practical land. The other day Mr. Robert Blatchford declared that if it comes to that he would prefer potatoes to Shakespeare. We do not know if a race of men will come who will propose to sell the Crown Jewels for capital to start an all-world British Industrial Imperial League. Macaulay looked forward to a time when the British would politically retire from India on condition of free commerce with her. But he did not, perhaps, realise that nations like Germany and Japan would rise, and that the hour would bring forth its man, Joseph Chamberlain. My point is that it is getting more difficult for India to get real fiscal autonomy. But the gist of my theme, again, is that India cannot live longer unless she gets it by whatever means.

All our endeavours, all our agitation, must be directed to make the Indian Government a national government in an economic sense. The impossible must be made possible. The joint Report, judging by the quotation already given by me from Paragraph 135, raises a suspicion in my mind that its authors did for a moment get a full vision of the bed-rock truth of our industrial position in India. But, as I go along reading the Report, I find that nothing better is attempted therein than a sorry rubbing at the solution of the problem. The eras of ruin and restlessness should have been followed with an era of reparation. The *magnam opus*, so far, of a regenerated Government, however, is the report of the Industrial Commission. Can it make adequate amends to India for the economic degradation so far inflicted upon her? But it is profitless to carry speculation even so far. We have seen the Report, but we have yet to see the Government despatch upon it. The Viceroy said, at a recent meeting of his Legislative Council, that he was planning to lay the foundations very deep for an edifice of industrially regenerated India. Let us all hope to live long enough to see the foundations rear up their heads above the surface of the water. For we have often seen the foundations of good intentions swept away by the surging tide of selfishness. In all the speeches of Lord Curzon, made in India, you will find the word Indian industrial development as being synonymous or co-extensive with commercial development. Receiving the freedom of the City of London his lordship told his audience that in his opinion India was a country where there would be large openings for the investment of capital in the future and where a great work of industrial and commercial development lay before them. Need I say, however, he only thought of the coalfields of Bengal, the gold mines of

Kolar, the oil fields of Burma, and the tea gardens of Assam ?

We all know what the national Government of Japan has done for its industry. On the other hand, we know that the Indian Government spends much less upon industrial education than upon lunatic asylums. The new Governor of my Province recently advised the students of the Fergusson College to discard literary in favour of industrial education. I wish, however, that he had told them at the same time, as an industrial propagandist, how many technical schools and colleges existed in India and what kind of education was actually available for Indian boys therein. Perhaps His Excellency is not aware that a limited number of boys can be admitted to any institution of special instruction and that the so-called experts imported into India from England give very little practical education to their students and rather themselves learn at the cost of the Indian Treasury and come away to seek better jobs in this country. The real history of the Tata Research Institute, if boldly and impartially told, will make revelations which must put the Indian faith in British beneficence and good faith to the severest test. And yet we find the writer of the latest report on the moral and material condition of India coolly mentioning the Institute as something for the benefit of which the people must thank the Government.

I think all this will be changed materially, if not entirely, if the Indian people get political power—that is, power to spend the money raised by taxation on such purposes of public education and utility as they think best. I am not one of those who would rely exclusively upon Government, whether it be alien or of our own, whether despotism or democracy, to improve the industrial condition of our country. I do believe that side by side with the



acquisition of popular control over the public purse the Indian people must also change their own outlook upon life and recognise the due importance of self-initiative and self-help and create in the coming generations a love of scientific culture and practical training. The dignity of manual labour must be held before their eyes as a thing to be *more largely appreciated than hitherto*. I do not agree with those who regard Mill, Burke and Macaulay as unhealthy for the Indian climate, but I do hold that along with their works the lives of such men as Watt, Stephenson, and Kelvin should be given a prominent and honoured place on the student's bookshelf. The man of industrial and scientific genius must, of course, be born and cannot be created by an official mandate. But the fulfilment of genius of any kind can be realised only in a free country. The plea for political power and fiscal autonomy cannot be whittled down, but only strengthened by the gospel of self-help. To win these at the hands of a close-fisted despotism is certainly an uphill task; but we do believe it is not impossible, and that is why we are in this country at this psychological moment.

(17-10 1919)

### Reply to Poona Municipality's Address

Mr. Apte and Gentlemen,

I am extremely obliged to you for the honour you have done me by giving me the present address. But I must say you have taken me by surprise. I am glad to find that the consciousness of your independence as a corporation has evolved so far as to set a good example of voting an address to a non-official. And I congratulate

you sincerely upon your good fortune in having Mr. Tilak as the first non-official recipient of your address so far. If the Freedom of the City of Poona were a more important reality, as it is in England, than an address you would have, I am sure, conferred that freedom upon Mr. Tilak long ago. He more than richly deserves it at your hands. For, it is not Poona that has made Mr. Tilak famous, but it is Mr. Tilak that has made Poona an object of admiration in India and in England. He is the most senior, the most prominent, public-spirited, and patriotic citizen of Poona now alive, and it is worthy both of him and your Corporation. I should say our Corporation, that his services to the country should be thus recognised by an address by the City Corporation.

I do not, however, approve of your taste in one small matter. I am afraid you have made the address business somewhat cheap by presenting it also to me on the present occasion. If I had a voice in the matter I should have left Mr. Tilak alone in his position of an isolated grandeur because there is no one, myself the least of all, who can be mentioned with propriety at the same function with Mr. Tilak. I should have esteemed it as a more cherishable privilege if I were allowed by you to join with you as an ordinary member of the Poona Corporation in greeting Mr. Tilak back to Poona after his eminent services to India in England. I should have liked to participate in the honour done to Mr. Tilak rather than myself have a share in it, though I may be a member of the Congress Deputation along with him, and your ex-President.

As you have, however, chosen to give me an address, I can at this moment do nothing but express my own true sentiments in the matter, while of course thanking you for your generosity. I agree with you only in one thing *viz.* that I have been a member of this Municipality for a

to attempt greater exertion and usefulness and that I may thus deserve your generous treatment in future.

(7-12-1919)

## My Experiences in England

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar's interview*

Q.—Did you enjoy your trip to England ?

A.—Yes, I think I did, so far as it was possible under the peculiar circumstances. It was mainly a business trip and from the business point of view I may say that the deputation as a whole gave a pretty good account of itself.

Q.—Does it mean that the members of the deputation could not do much travelling and sight-seeing ?

A.—They possibly could not; most of the time of the deputation was taken up by one thing or another relating to its business; and travelling and sightseeing is a thing which cannot be satisfactorily done in odds and ends of leisure which could not be commanded with certainty. Speaking for myself I had never intended to go to Ireland, Scotland I might have visited as one of the lecturing party, but it happened that the responsible editor of *India*, Miss Normanton, having gone on a holiday for three weeks at the particular time, I was practically stuck up to London. In any case I hoped to be able to see France but as fate would have it, the boat by which I obtained my passage was ordered not to touch Marseilles.

Q.—It must have been then a great disappointment to you ?

A.—In a way it was; but I always like something left to be desired and not to be able to say that I have seen everything that I would like to see. Perhaps the disappoint-

ment may prove an added inducement to go again if possible, but on the whole I think England has not much to offer by way of sight-seeing. I would never advise any one to undergo the trouble and expense of a visit to England unless it be to earn money or to learn business or business-organisation. I have often fancied that with only the added gift of an ever-green grass as in England, India would have nothing to be desired for any one enamoured of natural scenery. Even in London it is not sights as sights that are attractive, but the silent education enshrined in the well-preserved ancient buildings, and still more so the wonderful memories and historical associations which they carry with them.

Q.—As regards the work of Congress Deputation, you must have noticed comments made upon it in certain papers?

A.—Yes. But any one who knows that the comments are made in the papers of the rival deputations will not worry for one moment over them. I think the statement of evidence given on behalf of the Congress Deputation was cogent and forceful, and it must be regarded as having served its purpose, as it faithfully represented Indian popular opinion and was true to the Congress mandate. The saying "He who aims the sky shoots much higher than he that aims a tree," may be made applicable to the statement of the Congress Deputation. The other factor of the work of the Deputation *viz.*, lectures, was also very successful.

Q.—Did you see the disparaging remarks made by the correspondent of the *Times of India* about the lecture programme?

A.—Yes. Lectures were this time no good in his eyes simply because the other deputations did not go in for them. Otherwise they might have been declared to be just the kind of work to be done!

Q.—Was it then a triumph only of negotiation ?

A.—Which ?

Q.—The Bill as it has emerged from the Committee ?

A.—It is more the result of the time-spirit and world force as voiced by the Congress and the Muslim League than of skilful negotiation. Mr. Montagu must certainly have liked to be buttressed by some kind of opinion in his fight with his reactionary opponents. But I really think the bludgeon of national disapproval of small reforms in India must have come after all more handy to the tactful Secretary of State than the approval and the support of a few distinguished Indians in the Moderate deputation.

Q.—What about the differences between the different deputations in England ?

A.—The differences were after all not greater in England than in India. It is a case of unnatural perspective which shows things at a distance as looming larger than when they are near ! As for the attempts made for reconciliation, Mr. Bhurguri's letter, I suppose, gives the necessary information.

Q.—What about the future work ?

A.—Beyond saying that the continuity of work in future in England must be maintained, I cannot, I think, say anything more. As regards the actual scheme, Mr. Tilak will probably place one such before the Congress, and there is every probability of its being adopted. *There are no inherent difficulties in the situation; but, on the other hand, it cannot also be a walk-over.* More men, more money and more organisation—that is what is wanted for success. This seems trite but it is true.

Q.—What about the British Congress Committee ?

A.—The British Congress Committee is now an entirely Congress body and may be relied on in future to support the Congress cause. The Committee has enthusiastically

welcomed the prospect of Indians selected by the Congress going to England to co-operate with it.

Q.—Who are the moving spirits of the B. C. Committee ?

A.—Dr. Clark, who was practically one of the founders of the Committee, is now its chairman. He is a stalwart radical who has seen Parliamentary life and was associated with Mr. Gladstone. Had it not been for him and Dr. Rutherford, this Congress body in England might have been lost to the Congress. Dr. Rutherford is already known to Indian people through his one or two books. He was also present at the Surat Congress. The new Hon. Secretary of the Committee is Mr. Parekh to whose vigilant advocacy of the Congress cause in the British Congress Committee we owe a good deal of the success of the present arrangements. The Committee has on it now more Indian members than perhaps ever before.

Q.—What about the *India* ?

A.—You already know why and how Mr. Polak had to resign his editorship of the paper. The present editor, Miss Normanton, was working as his assistant, some months before the Deputation arrived in London. Though loyal to her chief in her work, she made no secret of her judgment that the paper *India* ought to loyally support the Congress cause. And that is why when Mr. Polak resigned Miss Normanton remained on the spot, and, being in no way inferior in qualifications to Mr. Polak, she was naturally promoted to the editorial post. The fact that I was appointed associate editor during my stay in England probably intercepted the attention of the readers of the paper from her to me and I am sorry in a way that her qualifications were not made known to Indian readers in such detail as they should have been before.

Q.—What are her qualifications ?

A.—To put it briefly, her University qualifications are so high that I do not think there are half a dozen women in India who possess them. In the first place she is a B. A. of the London University, having won First Class Honours in History. She is a Diplomee of the French University of Dijohn. At Glasgow University she was lecturer to Post-Graduates on methods of teaching History, and also Senior History-Mistress of the Glasgow High School for girls which contains a thousand girls. She was the first General Secretary to the 'National Women Citizens' Association,' and the Liberal Press complimented her on her able secretaryship. She is a London University Extension Lecturer. Her ambition of life is to be called to the Bar. After her appeal to the Benchers of the Middle Temple was rejected, she made an appeal to the Lord Chancellor which is still pending, and will be withdrawn only if the 'Women's Civil Disqualification Removal Bill' which is already passed by the Lords, is passed by the Commons. She has written a book on socialistic questions and has done active service in the Militarist Section of the suffragist forces. I have heard her speak only once on the public platform, and I think she has the gift of pointed and persuasive eloquence, not of the orator but of the lawyer fashion. *The Pall Mall Gazette* once even acclaimed her as the best woman speaker in the country, but it is probably a newspaper exaggeration. St. Nihal Singh, writing in the *Modern Review*, has described her as progressive and able. As for her knowledge about India, it is of course more instinctive and sympathetic than book-acquired. But to a student of such intellectual qualifications it would not be at all difficult to come up to the mark with a little industry.

Q.—What about Indians being associated in the work of the British Congress Committee?

A.—The Committee I know would simply welcome it. The new constitution provides that at least one Indian gentleman, selected by the Congress, should be hereafter either Secretary or joint Secretary of the Committee or editor or joint editor of the *India*. It is, therefore, for the Congress to choose its delegate and send him at once. So far as I know Miss Normanton would sincerely welcome the assistance and the advice of an Indian colleague in the cause of the improvement of the paper from the Indian point of view.

Q.—Who is Mr. Blizzard about whom something was written in the *Times of India*?

A.—Yes, I have read that unworthy pun made by the *Times'* correspondent on his name. But he would, I am sure, enjoy that pun because he knows that as a worker in the Labour movement he is determined to blast the Capitalist and the bureaucratic cause in India as well as in England so far as one man can do it. He is an active worker in the Fabian Society. This year he has topped the poll in the Municipal elections in his ward. He has made the fortune of one or two insurance companies. He is a man of independent means. And he is a quick and enthusiastic organiser. The last lecturing tour of the Deputation was entirely and, I think also successfully, organised by him. And to me he has expressed a desire that he would like to organise more campaigns of the kind if the Congress would send its mission again.

Q.—So that in your opinion the present is a good nucleus of an agency for the propagandist work in England?

A.—Quite. The Congress may be sure that all the office-bearers of the B. C. Committee and the paper *India* are thoroughly radical and entirely sympathetic with the Congress. And an Indian Congress Mission, if sent to



England, will receive very good start and much valuable help.

Q.—The Deputation, I take it, has thus completely succeeded in this part of its work. By whose efforts was its work so successfully done?

A.—I think without being accused of self-complacence, the Deputation could claim that credit. But I must add something to this. People in India have perhaps no idea as to the most successful and effective spade-work done in this direction by Mr. Tilak before the Deputation arrived. The Deputation, being a formally recognised body, could be of course used as the necessary lever in dealing with the old British Congress Committee. But the whole ground was prepared by Mr. Tilak himself, with his constant interviewing and reasonable representations. I can quite imagine, in fact I know from experience on one or two occasions, how humiliating was it made for Mr. Tilak to manage his relations with the British Congress Committee of which body he would not even be made at one time a member. But we all know that humiliations do not count with Mr. Tilak when he is determined to bring about certain results. I wonder if the Congressmen of the Nationalist School were not regarded by some members of the old British Congress Committee as human monsters or dacoits who were going to rob and strangle the British Committee. And some of these members actually resigned the membership of the Committee when it openly espoused the Congress cause. But I think those that have remained have found that even Congress delegates are human beings with the common modicum of gentility, reasonableness, and selfless patriotism. Then again Mr. Tilak had to fight against great odds, before the Deputation arrived, in the matter of getting the London public to properly under-

stand and appreciate the Congress scheme of reforms. At every meeting, he impressed the audience with his remarkably terse statement of facts and brilliant reasoning. You all know what remarkable powers Mr. Tilak possesses of narrowing down the issues in a controversy and I may say he had never before an opportunity like the one he had in England, for displaying his powers of elucidating matters of controversy, and standing erect upon his own platform among the ruins of his opponents. He had quite a large variety of opponents from the aggressive Sinn Féiner and *bona fide* revolutionist in England, who would, if he could, blast the Indian constitutional workers with his supreme contempt, to the facile and plausible official exponent who dared to appear on the public platform to make the worse cause appear the better. But the final verdict of every audience Mr. Tilak addressed was, I believe, that while with his peculiar subtlety and tactfulness he put the revolutionist out of court, he made mince-meat of the official or the semi-official propagandist. And all this he had to do when the Chirol case had apparently given him a deadly blow. In fact his whole work of interviewing and addressing meetings was done after the verdict in the case, and let me take the opportunity to say that it is a false notion that the verdict had cut away the ground from under his feet. The deputation, when it arrived, practically found him beaming with the flush of his first success in spreading the Congress propaganda. The Deputation had practically everything already splendidly prepared for them. They had absolutely no difficulty to encounter but simply to go on with the facility Mr. Tilak had already created for them by his work. Even after the Deputation arrived the guiding hand and the deciding voice was Mr. Tilak's own in many matters.

Q.—What sort of relations Mr. Tilak had with the officials?

A.—I think they were as satisfactory as they may be expected. Mr. Tilak was given an interview twice or thrice by Mr. Montagu, and in no sense could it be said that he was officially boycotted though of course that could never mean that he was as thick with any official as any Moderate can be. I think Mr. Tilak often saw Mr. Basu, and at one time Mr. Basu visited Mr. Tilak at his house. The officials treated him with respect though naturally at some distance, but that is neither here nor there because Mr. Tilak had nothing practically to do with the officials.

Q.—And what about his relations with different parties?

A.—Mr. Tilak would have of course liked to get assistance from the Conservative and the Liberal party along with the Labour party. But owing to the Coalition muddle, both these parties are practically non-existent. The only party that counts for something in British Parliament is the Labour party, and most of the leaders of that party have made it as clear as it can be that they recognise Mr. Tilak as the best and the most important advocate of the Indian cause. Not only his sufferings have made a deep impression upon them but they have found that in conversation and debate he can put things as effectively and tactfully as any among them, and they did not conceal that they felt in a way honoured by their association with an Indian leader with a following which exceeded their imagination. The truth of my observations will be apparent if and when some of the messages received by Mr. Tilak from the Labour leaders could be published. I think the report of the speeches given in the *India*, of the Parliamentary lunch, on the eve of our

departure, will give some idea as to the sentiments of Labour leaders towards him and India. (7-12-1919)

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## The Amritsar Congress

On Tuesday evening Mr. N. C. Kelkar delivered a lecture on the subject of the Amritsar Congress in the Gaikwad—Wada grounds under the chairmanship of Lok. B. G. Tilak.

Mr. Kelkar premised by saying that he thought he was called upon to give a lecture that day mainly because he was a delegate to the Congress, elected by the Poona public as represented by one or two local electorates. In the early days of the Congress, this practice was even more current, and it was really the duty of elected delegates always to render to their electors an account of what they did, how they voted, and, last but not the least, why they voted in a particular way. The Congress having been held for so many years and in so many places, the delegates had now ceased to entertain a mixed motive in attending a Congress session. They regarded it now a purely political duty as Congressmen, rather than a travelling tour which enabled one to visit neighbouring religious shrines, or to see famous scenes and sights, or to understand at first hand the manners and customs of other Indian provinces. He cited the instance of the Madras contingent of Congressmen who this year made the long long journey from one end of India to the other from purely patriotic motives and thus deserved great credit for their sense of duty.

Turning to the Amritsar Congress, Mr. Kelkar said the session had a two-fold importance, local as well as

national. *Local*, because the Amritsar people had successfully emerged from their fiery ordeal of repression; and Congressmen from all parts of India were eager to go and bear personal testimony to the admirable courage with which the Amritsar leaders in and outside the jail had splendidly rallied. The *national* importance arose from the fact that the resolutions to be passed at the Amritsar Congress, after the issuing of the Proclamation and the enactment of the Reforms Act, would have momentous bearing upon Indian politics.

Mr. Kelkar said he was glad he visited Amritsar, because for one thing he could personally visit the Jallian-wala Bagh, the famous scene of the heroism of General Dyer, and see with his own eyes the terrible wounds made even in the dead compound walls of surrounding houses. He was glad that he attended the Congress Session because it dealt with very important topics and passed resolutions some of which were useful both for future agitation and progress.

#### *Congress Resolutions*

Dividing the main resolutions in two or three groups, Mr. Kelkar dealt with them *seriatim* and proved how in each case the criticism passed on them by some of the leading anti-Congress critics was illogical, unfounded, or prejudiced. The objection that the Congress had lost its moral purity of the old days was only as ridiculous as the other viz. that the Congress had forfeited its truly representative character. He claimed that the motives of the new Congressmen were fully as disinterested and legitimate as of any old ones, not excluding Dadabhai Naoroji himself. The methods of the Congress again were fully as constitutional as before, in intention or practice. He must be indeed a reckless or a perverse critic, Mr. Kelkar observed, who would call the Congress

less representative than before, for he ought to know that the Congress had made a tremendous advance in recent years, whether in point of the number of delegates, the variety of electorates, the freedom from undue or excessive respect for the authority of leaders, the keenness and the length of debates. No doubt the autocratic rule of the patent old-world bosses had disappeared, but that was only because keener and more exerting spirits were coming forward.

Dealing with the objections taken to some of the resolutions, Mr. Kelkar said he felt he was in the happy position of being able to reply to one set of the anti-Congress critics by simply quoting the views of another such set. The resolutions on the subject of the Punjab atrocities were not open to any reasonable objection. Yet the *Leader* found fault with the idea of raising a memorial on the Jallianwala Bag grounds to the massacre of the innocent victims of General Dyer. The *Leader* obviously out-Christed Christ in advising forgiveness and forgetfulness. But Mr. Kelkar routed the pertinent reference made in this connection by the *Indian Social Reformer* to the Cawnpore Mutiny massacre memorial raised and maintained at Government expense. Some people took objection to the resolution by which the Congress demanded the recall of Lord Chelmsford. But they had the precedent of the wise and temperate Bombay Presidency Association, guided by Sir P. M. Metha, demanding the recall of Lord Curzon, who, though a bad enough Viceroy, had not to his discredit things like the Rowlatt Acts, the Punjab massacres, the Martial Law, and the great betrayal of Mr. Montagu's trust about the Reforms Scheme. If it be right to ask for the extension of the term of office of a Viceroy it was equally right to demand its curtailment. The Congress could not be regarded as vehemently passionate in

doing so, when an absolutely peacefully minded man like Mr. Gandhi stated before the Hunter Committee that he would have said to Lord Chelmsford, " Lord Chelmsford, you simply must go, if you do not repeal the Rowlatt Act!"

*Resolution on Reforms*

Speaking about the Congress resolutions on the Reforms Act, Mr. Kelkar said that the three parts of Mr. Das's proposition were as coherent with one another as were all these three together with the addendum about the co-working of the Act and thanks-giving to Mr. Montagu for his labours. He personally was always entirely for giving thanks to Mr. Montagu. It was an act of the barest human fairness. Mr. Kelkar then argued how each of the three clauses of Mr. Das's resolution was consistent with others. About the clause relating to India's fitness for Self-Government he pointed out Mr. Shastri himself had admitted such fitness. The second clause was a restatement of an ideal and a demand already made at Delhi. In the third clause the inadequacy of reforms being admitted, it naturally led to dissatisfaction and disappointment.

*Co-operation—Its Meaning*

Mr. Shastri had charged the Congress with giving a wrong lead by this resolution to the country. Happily the *Times of India* had expressly stated that in its opinion the resolution on the Reforms Act was in " the right direction " Speaking about co-operation in the matter of working out the Reforms Act Mr. Kelkar admitted in a general way the need for it and predicted that as a matter of fact practical co-operation was bound to come when Indians would actually set themselves to the task of practical administration. But he laid stress on certain special considerations which required that men like Mr. Shastri had better address their advice for co-

operation to the Civilians than to the Indian politicians. How were Indians bound to obtrusively parade a pledge of co-operation on their sleeves when the Civilians had given no sign of their readiness to relent and work with Indians in a friendly spirit? The Civilians' threat to resign and make Government impossible, if reforms were granted, was still loudly ringing in their ears, when no word about boycotting reforms was ever uttered by any Indians of standing and influence.

The king had indeed done his duty in calling upon both sides to co-operate. So also Mr. Montagu. If it were only a case of co-operating with either of these there would be absolutely no difficulty. Have the Civilians directly or indirectly expressed their sincere desire to co-operate? If they could organise and demonstrate against reforms, threaten and terrorise, support movements like the Round Table, why could they not make an open and collective offer to co-operate with the advening Ministers? A thing like that on their side would be highly appreciated. As pointed out by the *Indian Social Reformer*, however, the Civilian would be persuaded to co-operate only when he would be convinced in his heart and prepared to openly admit that he was not a superior being but a really equal subject of His Majesty with the Indian in India. The sense of patronage is necessarily destructive of the sense of comradeship. When such a small reform as the permission to town Municipalities to elect their own Presidents, was inaugurated in the Bombay Presidency by even such a cautious man like Lord Sydenham, some Civilians showed unwillingness to accept it, and betrayed their want of graciousness by welcoming the reform only in the hope that the new non-official Presidents would deservedly be 'stewed in their own juice!' When the Civilians were well-known to



harbour that kind of sentiment, how could the non-official be assured that *his* co-operation would be fruitful? When the Spartan soldier complained to his captain that his sword was rather short, he was advised to put one step forward more than his comrades. Suppose the non-official put one step forward, but the Civilian took one step backwards, would not the resulting distance or the hiatus be the same ?

It should be remembered that the difficulties under the new scheme of responsible government were greater and more real for the non-official Minister than the Civilian; and so if any one really deserved sympathy it was rather the former than the latter. The Civilian had everything in his favour; experience, training, prestige, the command of reserved departments, almost an assured supply of finance, and the momentum of vested interests. It was, therefore, for him rather than the non-official Indian to clear the ground by openly proclaiming *his* readiness to co-operate and assure his comrade that the handing over of the keys of office and power would, on his part, be accompanied with a sincere, heartfelt blessing and not a curse bred in despair. It was for the English Civilian to say to the Indian Minister 'Comrade, let us forget the past; let us be friends, nay brothers: let us attempt the common task together; all my training, all my good-will is freely laid at your service, don't feel nervous; if you fail, I should regard it a greater disgrace to me than to you, because I had the advantage over you and it was my duty to teach you, train you and co-operate with you.'

True co-operation could not come unless and until a complete identity was established between the interests of India and those of England. Nothing would have served so much as a guarantee of Indian co-operation as the

knowledge that the reforms inaugurated were due to the good-will of the Civilian. But as Mr. Shastri himself has confessed in one of his Madras speeches the reforms could not be traced to anything like altruism in the Civilian. They were due to the war, and surely this credit of the war was not a thing calculated to inspire co-operation. The mutual helpfulness of India and the Empire was more or less only accidental like that between the Forest and the Tiger" as described in the Mahabharata. It was based on sheer necessities of the situation not vital affection or love. The tiger protected the Forest by scaring away wood-cutters because the wood afforded him places of retreat the Forest offered shelter to the Tiger because he scared away the people who would but for him, mercilessly use the axe and ruin the woodland. Similarly the Empire protects India as a present and future military depot likely to be serviceable in wars in Central Asia, and India remains within the Empire because, deprived of British protection she would fall a victim to a nation of worse aggressors, usurpers and oppressors. This feeling ought to go away, and a more vital identification be established between the genius of India and the genius of Great Britain, before co-operation worth the name could be experienced. If there was any need of advice, therefore, it was in the direction of the Civil Service; and Mr. Kelkar requested Mr. Shastri to attempt that rather than exhort his own people.

Mr. Kelkar said further that even as it was, however, a kind of co-operation was bound to result when the new Act would be put into operation. The Nationalists, however, could not be deceived by the shy and the interested advice that Moderates were after all the best people to be elected to the Legislative Councils. No, the Nationalists were determined to enter the Councils and

to work the Reforms in the hope that the work would lead to winning more and larger reforms. If *ex hypothesi* the Nationalists were more in need of training, in co-operation and knowledge of departmental working than Moderates, it followed that the Nationalists should, by preference, be sent into the Councils, for that was the place where they could get these. Mr. Shastri ought not to judge the whole Nationalist party by either the stray, unguarded, or perverse words of Mr. Pal and attribute to them all a desire to launch upon nothing else than a policy of obstruction. Mr. Tilak had offered *responsive* co-operation, meaning that he would be prepared to co-operate with the official in the same spirit and to the same extent as the latter would do. The Civilian is fond, proud, and boasts of taking the initiative. Why should he not take the initiative in openly offering co-operation in a sincere and convincing manner? If Mr. Pal was to be taken at his word, why should they not take Mr. Shastri at his when he said that a statue must be raised to Mr. Montagu in every Indian village? The words of the one are obviously as much the language of rhetorical exaggeration as those of the other.

In bringing the proceedings of the meeting to a close, Mr. Tilak explained how there was a triangular fight between the Congress parties at Amritsar and how eventually the country's opinion, and not the opinion of this or that party, prevailed. He was entirely satisfied, he said, with the Amritsar session and the resolutions passed thereat.

(18-1-1920)

## Sholapur Provincial Conference, 1920

( *Presidential Address* )

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We meet to-day in the Twentieth Provincial Conference. It is your desire and decision that I should preside on this occasion. I bow to it in all humility and gratitude. May I request, however, that you will extend your goodwill to me throughout the sittings of this Conference ? The work before us is bound to be arduous for all concerned. Patience and forbearance are at a discount when the thermometer reads ' hundred and two ' in the shade. A heated atmosphere is likely to generate mental as well as physical electricity. I would, therefore, earnestly appeal to all assembled in this gathering to actively promote the cause of friendliness and harmony. ,

### *A Pleasant Contrast*

Most of you, like myself, remember the successful session of the 12th Provincial Conference, which met at Sholapur in 1902. The small Ripon Hall could then comfortably accommodate the delegates, the visitors and all else. The Conference has since grown appreciably. The number of delegates already registered for this Conference is, I am told, over 2400. In fact, our District Conferences to-day are as big as, or even bigger than, our Provincial Conferences of old. But the growth is not on the physical plane alone. Our ideas, our sentiments, and our aspirations have all grown immensely during the last eighteen years. Read the report of that Conference and you find that the reform of the Judicial Department was the greatest topic that we then discussed under Provincial Administration. The Universities Commission was the greatest controversial topic relating to all-India politics.

Our friend Justice Setalvad, who presided over that Conference, was still concerned in his address with vindicating the loyalty of the Indian people. There was then, as even now, a war in the background of our minds. It was claimed for that war that it would, and really did, stagger humanity at the time. But it was no bigger than the Boer War. No greater event than the 'Delhi Durbar of the 1903 was then expected to signalise "the entry of India into its proper place in international affairs."

How wonderfully have things changed since then! Instead of the reactionary report of the Raleigh Universities Commission of 1902 we have lately had the hopeful and the liberal report of the Saddler Commission! We have ceased to be content with piecemeal reform in Provincial administration, and have nailed our demand for full Provincial Autonomy to the gates of Parliament! No one now dares question the loyalty of the Indian people. It has been proved to the hilt in a literal as well as metaphorical sense in a world-wide Armageddon compared with which the Boer War was but a petty conflict on the distant outposts! And as for the entry of India in international affairs, the event has not now been signalised by an empty Durbar, which was then no better than a childish exhibition of morbid personal vanity in a pro-consul; but we have in stead the formal enrolment of India, by a solemn covenant, as an integral member of the League of Nations! The year of Mr. Setalvad's Presidentship was memorable for the Coronation of Edward VII as Emperor of India. I can happily refer to something more enduring and cherishable, I mean, the Gracious Proclamation of the son of Edward VII, by which India is declared entitled to full responsible self-government! But the younger generation is, Sir Chimanlal himself well knows, always privileged to ride

on the crest of the wave of political progress, and he would not grudge me, his younger brother, my good fortune in this respect.

*The Giant and the Liar!*

Well, referring to our loyalty once more, I may say the question now is not whether the Indian people are loyal, but whether their loyalty has been sufficiently rewarded—loyalty proved by shedding their blood and treasure in the darkest times the British Empire has ever seen. And while on this point let us compare what are the gains of England and India. This highly 'philanthropic' war gives England a million of additional square miles in Africa alone. This means a territory nearly as large as  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the United States. It gives in her charge more than 11 millions of African people. Add to this the whole of Mesopotamia. Then there are again over 6 lakhs of square miles and 9 million souls in Persia whom England has recently taken under her exclusive control by a secret deal with the Shah without any reference to the people of Persia. In the name of maintaining her hold on India, England has again established her supremacy in Tibet, and is striving to assert by military force her authority in Afganistan. The war was fought, and the League of Nations was established, to prevent aggression by any power, and yet England intends to use the Covenant of the League to guarantee all these gains to her permanently! Are not British politics really always—

"Too comic for the solemn things they are

Too solemn for the comic touches in them?"

Now what are the gains of India on the other hand? The answer must be "a huge burden of public debt, killing high prices, permanent growth in military expenditure, the Rowlatt Act, and the Punjab massacres!" Verily it has been one more illustration of the fable of the Giant and

the Dwarf. "The Dwarf," says Goldsmith, "had now lost an arm, a leg and an eye, while the Giant was without a single wound. Upon which the Giant cried out to his companion, 'My little hero, this is glorious sport; let us get one victory more, and then we shall have honour forever.' 'No' cries the Dwarf, who by this time was grown wiser, 'no; I declare off; I will fight no more; for I find in every battle you get all the honour and rewards, but all the blows fall upon me.' "

India of course does not grudge England her good fortune. But is she not entitled to say to England:—"Madam, you and I have been admittedly partners in toil and travail. You have made such enormous profits out of the war. You have practically carved out another additional empire for yourself. For myself I do not seek the extension of my frontiers by a single yard. In fact, I would even cut out some portions of the so-called Indian Empire—some notoriously fortuitous accretions and parasites. You may keep all your glorious conquests of men and territory to yourself. But will you not give my sons and daughters, in return, only their own political freedom? In the time of your trouble, you chose America as your umpire and appealed to her to judge of your enemies. Do you know, Madam, what that judge now says of yourself? President Wilson, poor philosopher, is naturally tongue-tied. But has not the American nation pronounced an unmistakable verdict upon your character by nearly repudiating the whole Treaty as unrighteous? Are you not further aware, Madam, that one specific reason for this repudiation is your treatment of my sons and daughters? The Publicity Boards of the British Government in India may have lost their sense of proportion, and may parade, as a testimonial to your character, the words of a mere American woman in the street. But the world would

certainly put a higher price upon the words of a leading American politician like Senator France, or a leading American journal like the *Nation* of New York. In October last in discussing the Treaty, Senator France put the following question to the Senate :—‘Sirs, do you feel justified in the ratification of a Treaty under which the Republic guarantees to perpetuate the rule of the British autocracy in India, a rule out of harmony with all the best traditions of the English people, one characterised by a ruthless exploitation which has received for generations the condemnation of the Liberal Statesman of England?’ The *Nation* of New York in its issue of the 31st January last, in discussing the relations of England and India, puts the question ‘What is India?’ and answers it as follows:—‘It is a country of more than 300 million peoples held in subjection to Great Britain by military force, exploited for the benefit of manufacturers and merchants and bankers in the British isles, and administered by a highly organised Civil Service, the chief posts in which are the perquisites of the British aristocracy. The cold-blooded massacre at Amritsar is only the most recent illustration of a policy which has characterised British Rule in India since British Rule began, and which has burned into the hearts of the Indian people a hatred of England and the English which time only deepens and intensifies.’

#### *The Real Value of Reforms*

It may be said that political Reforms have now come and will change all this. But can they really? Are the Reforms such a great and such an unmixed good that they will change the entire face of things? Like the lotus, which grows in mud and mire, the Indian political Reforms have indeed been born in the filthiest rut of human passions in the hearts of European nations. The Reforms have, however, not yet attained either the fragrance or the beauty



of the premier Indian flower. Dyarchy which is the essence of the Reforms is like a hybrid exotic, which is the wonder of the scientific botanist, but the despair of the loving gardener.

I do not mean to unduly criticise the *Principle* of dyarchy. It is no doubt a kind of a half-way house between the two extremes of claiming everything and conceding nothing. But we should have liked the operation of this principle to be confined only to the Central Government. We should have liked the Provincial Governments to be left entirely to the control-responsible control if you please of the Provincial Legislative Councils. But dyarchy has been applied even to the Provincial sphere within very small dimensions. In fact, over the entire surface of the waters of Reform, there seemed to be moving a spirit determined to investigate only the mathematical minima of evolutionary reform and political concession. I willingly believe with some other people that Mr. Montagu would have perhaps gone much further, if he had not on his shoulders the incubus of confirmed reactionaries like Curzon, Sydenham, O'Dwyer, Verney Lovett, Welby and others. But though Mr. Montagu himself may be an angel, the Reforms Act is not Mr. Montagu. Being primarily concerned in the affair, we have a valid right to weigh and assay the volume of reforms to find their proper specific gravity and value in the political market. I could myself weary you, if I felt disposed like some other people, with a long list of points of small merit about the new Reforms. But when one looks at the whole thing from a broad point of view, he cannot help agreeing with the Congress that the Reforms are inadequate, disappointing and unsatisfactory.

Now what amount of power is actually transferred to us in the administration by these Reforms? What per-

centage of the revenue and expenditure of the country for one thing may be involved in the administration of departments that are transferred to popular control ? Out of a total revenue and expenditure of 193 crores of rupees, not more than 23 crores will come under the formal control of the people. And even this, I believe, is an overstatement in favour of Government. The Report of the Functions Committee, which is practically adopted by Parliament, shows that roughly speaking about 10 departments are transferred under the Reforms for popular administration. But there are so many reservations made in the administration of even these departments, that you never can tell what is really given and what is withheld. The set-back comes through a number of doors. Now it is the law-making power itself that is reserved, or it is the power to regulate the policy in some essential, or the power to deal with the higher establishment therein, or the power to differentiate between the Imperial and Provincial interests, and so on. And over and above all this, there is of course the power of the Governor to set aside any decision of the Minister or the Legislative Council. There is every reason, therefore, to say that the valuation of the Reforms does not come up even to two annas in the entire rupee of the power of self-government.

But the financial index is not the only criterion of judging these Reforms. For, in the first place, the entire realm of the Central Government is excluded from responsible administration; and, it is the Central Government that formulates the higher, and, therefore, the vital policies of the State. The Central Government is the really supreme Destiny which weaves the webs of Fortune for both the Rais and the Ryot in India, and we cannot help feeling ridiculous when we find ourselves excluded like Pariahs from the higher councils of the Olympic

gods. The three Indian Executive Councillors will no doubt be our own sentinels in the bureaucratic garrison. But who can say that incompetent men may not sometimes be chosen for these posts? After all they will have no decisive voice, and may have to confess, like Sir Sankaran Nair, their sense of impotence for good. Another point of criticism would be that inconvenient pairing has been made of earning and spending departments in the process of transfer, so that as a matter of curious accident, if not wicked design, the future reformer in the person of the responsible Minister would feel a challenge and a handicap at every step in putting his schemes into operation. Then, again, before its transfer, the administration has already been weighted down enormously by the fixation of high salaries and copious allowances of the higher establishment by the Secretary of State. The operation of the Reforms, therefore, looks very much like a game with loaded dice in a gaming-house. The only chance for a reforming Minister, even under the joint-purse system, would be in a running fight against odds within the executive Government. He is, therefore, the person most to be pitied under the new state of things as he would have to work with nothing but handicaps or pitfalls all round him. Next to him would come the Governor himself, who would have to bear the brunt of either displeasing his Executive Councillors on the one hand or incurring popular odium on the other. The Governor, I may say, would be no less under a trial than the Minister, though of course we know there is always a difference between the uneasiness that affects an uncrowned head and the head that wears a crown. The only enviable position is perhaps that of the European Executive Councillor, who can practically dominate everything without being actually responsible to anyone. It is he who is really the turning

point in the whole situation, and it is his readiness to willingly co-operate, and not that of the Minister, that can make the Reforms a success, if they ever can be so. in their present slipshod and uncouth fashion.

There is one more consideration which seriously detracts from the value of the present political reforms. It is the fact that our natural rights as free citizens of a civilised state are not yet guaranteed. Parliament has not granted the claim of the National Congress that a Declaration of Rights shall be included in the new statute. The Joint Committee summarily refused permission to the Congress Deputation to say anything about that before them. But the need for a Declaration of Rights grows more clamorous than ever. Neither the transferred departments nor the responsible Minister can save us from humiliating encroachments upon our safety and liberty by law or by civil or military action. The story of oppression and cruelty unfolded in the report of the non-official Punjab Commission is a terrible revelation. Things like these may not indeed happen every year or in every Province. But the mere fact that they can happen some time in some Province is enough to prove the necessity of the kind of Declaration of Rights which the Congress has been demanding. The strength of a chain is judged not by its strongest but by its weakest link and the country is entitled to demand a guarantee that things like these shall never happen anywhere again in this country.

It is a matter for regret that Government have not made the ground as smooth as they could have made it for the reception of even such inadequate Reforms as these. A somewhat narrow construction has been put by the executive Government upon the terms of the Amnesty granted by the Royal Proclamation. An attempt is be-

direction and to the King that they held themselves responsible. By impeachment or more indirect means the Commons could force a King to remove a minister who contradicted their will; but they had no constitutional power to replace the fallen statesman by a Minister, who would carry out their will. The result was the growth of a temper in the House which drove the King to despair."

The remedy for this, as suggested by Lord Sunder-land, was to choose the entire body of Ministers of the Crown exclusively from among the members of the party which was strongest in the Lower House, so that they could together form a homogeneous Ministry chosen from the same party, representing the same sentiments, and bound together for common action by a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the party to which it belonged. In this way were got over the personal predominance of Ministers the evils of independent action within the Ministry, and mutual opposition. The scheme of this new Ministerial system is put down by Green to the credit of the English mind for inborn political capacity. But unfortunately the English mind cannot look at Indian affairs with the same broad angle of vision as it does towards its own. In the domain of provincial administration at any rate should Government have applied at once the scheme of a homogeneous Ministry and complete responsible government, as no Imperial interests could be jeopardised even if mistakes were made in that sphere. The Joint Committee no doubt hopes that the executive Councillors and the Ministers would pull on well together. It is at best a righteous hope in which we may join; but the best possible relations between these two would be no answer to the demand that the people in the provinces were fit, even to-day, for full provincial popular autonomy. On the other hand there are cri-

tics, who no doubt agree that the Dyarchy with its two compartments has its counterpart in the human heart, but refuse to believe that like the heart also it can always beat with one full stroke. There are critics again who take a pessimistic view of the boon of responsibility, and believe that it is a device to stew the popular administrator, and through him the entire people, in their own juice !

Now can we accept Reforms like these without any protest or with entire satisfaction ? Is it not evident that what has been given is infinitesimally small in proportion to what has been withheld ? Can we rest on our oars under these conditions ? Would it be right to give up the further quest as if we had attained the *sumum bonum* or the *Nirvana* ? Who will fight our battles for the uncovered ground, if we withdraw all our forces into the narrow strip of this land in the name of consolidation ? Would it not be unwise to give up agitation and to depend entirely upon Parliament to widen the bounds of our freedom at the end of ten years, and only as the result of our passing an examination of our fitness ? No, we must strike while the iron is yet hot. Besides carrying on a vigorous agitation in India itself, we must endeavour to put the hypocritical advocates of the League of Nations in Britain and elsewhere to shame, while their tall talk of the 'freedom and the honour of nations and nationalities' is still fresh on their lips. A new World-Forum has been admittedly created for the benefit of all suffering nationalities in the world, and we must try to put up our case before that Forum for what it may be worth. The Congress has done well to appoint a Committee for carrying on further agitation in England and in other countries. With men on it like Lokmanya Tilak to supply the inspiration and initiative, and Lala

Lajpatrai to supply the needed experience of the conditions and methods of agitation in foreign lands, we can confidently hope that proposals would soon crystallise for vigorous action in this respect and that steps would be taken to start the work of a non-official or Congress embassy or consulate in countries where Indian affairs have begun to receive a hearing and whose opinion counts for something in the councils of the world-powers.

*The Prior Elector*

Now with all the tall talk about responsibility to the elector there will be, I am afraid, no responsibility worth the name for some time to come. Responsibility as between the British Elector, the popular Minister and the Indian Elector will still be, as before, like the single transferrable eye shared by the three divine sisters in Greek mythology, an eye that could be snatched away by the quick-fingered bureaucrat in the very process of transference from one to the other. I wish to point out that it is possible to exaggerate the importance of the so-called responsibility vested at present in the Indian elector. The British elector will still reign supreme, or, I should rather say, the autocratic European official, who deliberately uses the name of the British elector as a cover for his own doings. It is no doubt a democratic model that is placed before our eyes under the new scheme of Reforms, and the sound of the words 'direct elections', 'popular legislature', 'responsible government' is irresistibly charming to the ear. But if fullfledged democracy has failed to incarnate in countries, which are operating the system of representative and responsible government for centuries, it would be a vain hope that the mere embryonic Indian elector would either care or learn or succeed in dominating the situation for a long time to come.

I need not cite to you at length the abundant testimony to the discredit of working democracies in Western countries. The fault may now lie with the leaders of political thought, now with the machinery of representation, or now with the psychology of the elector. But somehow the result is that the true end and aim of democratic government has failed to be attained. Somehow it is not a real government of the people, for the people, and by the people; or people have not equal voice in the government in virtue of their manhood alone or no absolute harmony has been established between the acts of the executive government and the general good of the governed; or there has been no adequate expression of the real common will at all. It would, therefore, be premature to pretend that there would be an *avatar* of democracy in India at once, and that absolutism or autocracy would disappear from the land, simply because the electorates have been widened so as to bring about 5 millions of the population within its fold. Writing in 1914 on the subject of Proportional Representation, Mr. Fisher Williams describes the function of the British elector himself in these terms:—"The electorate as such is called upon at intervals, usually of about 5 years, to decide the constitution of the House of Commons and incidentally, which of the two larger political parties is to furnish the administration. Normally an elector has nothing more to do. He comes out of his cave at these long intervals like some powerful animal, he faces with dazzled eyes the turmoil, the glitter, and the shouting of a general election. Somehow or other he gives a vote which can only be the expression of his choice as between two parliamentary candidates. The choice is made, and for the next five years political journalists discuss to their own satisfaction the insoluble problem of what that choice meant!"



If the description applies with truth to the British elector of to-day, the Indian elector can hardly hope to escape it. The 1st of November next will probably be a busy and a memorable day for all of us. For, on that day will be held the new Council Elections in this Province, and perhaps even throughout the whole country. On that day well may the poor Indian elector for the first time sing the Quaker poet's ditty—

The proudest now is but my peer  
The highest not more high  
To-day of all the weary year  
A king of men am I.

To-day alike are great and small,  
The nameless and the known,  
My palace in the people's hall,  
The ballot-box my throne.

Most of those assembled here will be on that day called upon to go to the poll, and a large majority among these will, I believe, feel enthusiasm to exercise the new franchise. A few among us may have even the privilege of standing as candidates for these elections. It certainly requires a great imagination to visualise in anticipation the scenes that would be enacted on that day, when all the evil as well as the good forces of Demos would be let loose under a kind of license. My mind turns with delight to the inimitable description, in *Pickwick Papers*, of the Eatanswill election to Parliament. It is certainly typical of many elections that will be fought on the 1st of November next. Our Blues and our Buffs are already in evidence. Controversies between "our worthless contemporary the Gazette" and "that false scurrilous print the Independent" have already commenced in right earnest. The leading voters are already being approached by the Hon. Samuel Slumkey and Horatio Fizkin Esqr. Even

those who could not be voters may still have their use; and they are being drilled to make noise. "Who is Slumkey?" whispers Mr. Tupman. "I do not know," replies Mr. Pickwick. "Hush! do not ask any questions. It is always best on these occasions to do what the mob do." "But suppose there are two mobs," suggests Mr. Snodgrass. "Then shout with the largest" is the ready-witted reply of Mr. Pickwick again. Hon. Mr. Slumkey's Committee would soon be addressing "six small boys and one girl" and dignifying them with the imposing title of "ladies and gentlemen of the borough." And Hon. Mr. Slumkey himself is being trained to shake hands with twenty 'washed men' at the door and to kiss six dirty children in token of democratic love. The speeches of the candidates, though perhaps differing in all other respects would agree only in paying beautiful tributes to the merits and high worth of the electors. Fizkin would express his readiness to do any thing he was wanted, Slumkey his determination to do nothing that was asked him. I almost see the flags rustling, the carriages playing, the Police Constables swearing, the Committee men squabbling, the mob shouting and the post boys perspiring, everything for the special use, honour and renown of Honourable Samuel Slumkey to be elected to the Legislative Council. I only hope I shall not hear the boast of any election agent saying that he has opened all the public houses in the place leaving his adversary nothing but the beer shops; or hear the report that just one hour before the closing of the poll, a body of cool, calculating and determined voters bravely went in a body to the poll as the result of a private interview with Honourable Slumkey's canvassing agents.

*Duty of the Educated Leader*

This is perhaps a somewhat darkish picture of our new elections. But it is only borrowed from a humorist

who knows no malice. Further, you must remember that sometimes fact is stranger than fiction, and that a large proportion of elections all the world over are actually like that. England has amply borne out Dickens in his description of the Eatanswill election, in the past, she does so even now. The election machine is a poor inanimate thing. It will be good or evil as its human manipulators will make it. Voltaire, a stranger, eulogised the British constitution as a pattern of perfection. But do you know how Swift, *himself a Britisher*, denounced both that political machine and its operators? The King of Brobdingnag patiently heard all that Gulliver had to say in praise of the British people and their political constitution, and then passed the following judgment upon both :—"It does not appear from all you have said how any one perfection is required towards the procuring of any one station among you, much less that men are ennobled on account of their virtue, that priests are advanced for their piety or learning, soldiers for their conduct or valour, judges for their integrity, senators for the love of their country, *or councillors for their wisdom*. I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious Vermin that Nature has suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." I dare not imagine what even some of those who have been instrumental in pushing the Reforms to the point of the November elections may be inwardly thinking of the Indian Democracy that they have just set up on its feet. My point in all this is only to draw your attention to one cardinal fact. It is this that of course now, and even for a number of years to come it will be, as it has been, the duty of the few educated leaders and their politically-minded followers to keep an unfailing vigil over the interests of the country and carry on their fight against the foreign

bureaucracy. It will be their duty to think *for* the public even as much as to educate the people in political thinking.

Unsatisfactory as are the conditions of the new Reforms, and whatever he may think of the grudging spirit in which they are granted, and howsoever determined he may be to fight for further changes, the educated leader must immediately rush into the breach that is made by the Reforms in the citadel of the bureaucracy. He must aspire to be the master of the situation like Cæsar whose career on every new scene was epitomised in the three words "veni, vidi, vici" (I came, I saw, I conquered). The bugbear of responsibility need have no fears for him. For, after all, he belongs to a race which had perfected and wielded policies of administration in kingdoms and empires. And with a little training, backed by dogged determination to succeed, he can make himself a success in this new sphere as he has already done in other spheres also. There will no doubt be difficulties inherent in the situation as I have already remarked; but after all he must remember that the way to success lies through them and not around them. The composition of the new Council would not be very much helpful for this purpose some time to come, but there will be even in the new Council far more scope for effective organisation of public opinion than ever before. Some people seem to be afraid that the Council would be far too heterogeneous. The fear is not altogether groundless. But I have strong faith in the instinctive patriotism of the men that are likely to come into the Councils, and I refuse to believe that they will allow themselves to be used as tools in the hands of Government. The *intelligentsia* has already led the way. The merchant class has recently evinced a keen political sense and feeling. Landholders will be the last to rally. But I do not think even they

will go far astray. The old age of official terrorism is gone, and vested interests may be less in jeopardy in the future than in the past. But over and above all this there is a surging, sweeping tide of patriotism and love of self-Government which is coming over the land, and which will, I hope, efface all the old humiliating landmarks as between toadies, flunkies, loyalists, indifferents, dilettantes, moderates, nationalists, extremists, and anarchists. The landmarks of public policy and common weal will alone emerge and abide. Our policies may not be identical, but we shall all agree, I suppose, to recognise one cardinal fact that the salvation of India lies only in making the administration ever more and more submissive to the control of the common will of the Indian people so far as it could be ascertained for the time being even by a crude machinery of representation. For, it is after all the will that works and not machinery.

*Provincial Questions*

With your leave now, ladies and gentlemen, I would turn to briefly consider some of the Provincial questions. The first thing that strikes me in this connection is that while on the one hand our Provincial Conferences have grown in dimensions, a demand is also arising side by side with it for sub-Provincial Conferences. A handicap is naturally thrown in the way of the representative character of our Provincial Conferences by the mere fact that people have to travel great distances from one end of the Province to the other to attend them. A Conference like this has to be held only in Court holidays which may extend over nearly a week. But such holidays are few and far between. Then again, a variety of sub-Provincial political, social and industrial activities have developed in recent years and the conflict of engagements, held in accumulated reserve, is very trying and perplexing indeed.

Our friends in Sindh have found a way out of this difficulty by frankly demanding a separate Provincial Congress Committee, and by holding a separate 'Provincial Conference' which is, however, really only a sub-Provincial Political Conference. As for the purposes of administration, Sindh is yet a part of the Bombay Presidency. Gujrath has nearly followed suit. And I could not misunderstand or blame my Karnatak friends, if they too would like to go in for a separate Conference of their own. With the advent of the larger and more popular Legislative Councils you could not really expect a political conference held for the whole province for only two or three days in a year to deal with and thresh out all the Provincial questions of the year quite adequately. The division into sub-Provincial Congress Committees and also sub-Provincial Political Conferences would be not only a logical but an inevitable result of the growing political life and consciousness of the Province. The old Provincial Conference was a kind of a holiday tour or excursion for a few prominent leaders. It is now a political gathering in which the rank and file of not one but many political parties are eager to participate by joining the actual deliberations and asserting, in the form of resolutions, their confirmed political convictions. In hoping for a permanent establishment of sub-Provincial Conferences on the basis of language, I am not betraying, I am sure, any undue separatist or centrifugal tendency, but only voicing forth the desire for more effective deliberative bodies for a growingly living political society. Those who attach, and I think rightly attach, political value to the development of personal acquaintances and relations of friendship between the leaders of different sub-provinces or provinces, have still the National Congress for this purpose, and they can easily even improve upon

the situation by exchanging between the different sub-provinces or provinces the compliment of inviting distinguished strangers to preside at home Conferences.

*Sindh.*

Speaking for the sub-Province of Sindh, under the present conditions, I must say that the other divisions of the Presidency sincerely sympathise with Sindh in its peculiarly unfortunate position, so far as the benefits of direct rule by a Governor-in-Council is concerned. The Commissioner of Sindh is practically an autocrat, and rarely fails to take the fullest advantage of his position of splendid isolation. There is no reason why he should not be really made as harmless as any other Divisional Commissioner. But distance is an insuperable handicap even for a well-intentioned Governor, and his arm, though it may be strong, cannot also be adequately long to keep the Commissioner of Sindh in effective control. To be Governor-forsaken is almost as bad as being God-forsaken. The judicial administration of that sub-Province also suffers by reason of the fact that it is not under the jurisdiction of the High Court. The amalgamation of the judicial and executive powers in the hands of a practically irresponsible official is nowhere so productive of evil consequences, as it is in Sindh. We could not object to a demand by our Sindhi brethren, if they thought it fit to make, for Sindh being created an independent province with a separate responsible executive and a chartered High Court. But in the meanwhile the least that would be due to them is that the delegated powers of the Commissioner should be curtailed; that the Governor should regularly reside at Karachi for some weeks in the year, and that at least one session of the Bombay Legislative Council should be held at the capital of Sindh.

*Karwar*

Taking Karwar at the other end of the Province, its case is not, I must say, as hopeless as that of Sindh, though it must be recognised that communication with Karwar is very difficult during the monsoon. Happily our Karwari friends have so far indicated no desire to go out of the Province. But that is no reason why the Governor and his Councillors should not visit this far-off district oftener than they do at present, and give audience to representative leaders to know their grievances at first hand. The most crying grievances of the day in Kanara is a forest grievance. For aught I know, it is a grievance of a very long standing, and nowhere else is the Forest Department seen to exercise more peremptorily all its privileges as a special department to the detriment of the people. I almost suspect that the sylvan charms of Kanara have somehow proved too strong for the Chief Conservator of Forests to allow him to make reasonable concessions to the human population in the district. It is here we have now come positively to an issue whether the forest exists for the people or the people for the forest. It can be proved by statistics that in Karwar agriculture with all its allied occupations has seriously suffered owing to the unbounded ambitions of the Forest Department. One may indeed challenge Government to prove that apart from a few lakhs of Forest revenue, which again is derived by the curtailment of the natural rights of a people living in or on the skirts of a forest, any other tangible result has followed in the wake of the policy of conserving such an extraordinarily large forest area. Even the usual *raison d'être* of Forest does not here apply. For, in the much larger portion of the district, there is hardly ever any scarcity of rain. I cannot go into the full details of the



question here. But I would put forward on behalf of Karwar friends four main demands :—

(1) In the sea-coast sub-division of the District which is physically a very narrow strip of land, the Forest ought to be peremptorily put back a long way from the villages so that they can have the needed free elbow-room for themselves and their cattle

(2) In the interior every village must be given an adequate grazing land of its own under the control of the village itself. It is very hard to believe that while 82 per cent of the area of the District is Forest, not a single 'village forest' has so far been constituted.

(3) The common forest rights of pasturage, grass-cutting, bough-lopping, leaves-gathering, wood-cutting for timber, fuel, implements and small industries etc.—these ought to be granted to the population without reserve in a definite but adequate area. The business of agriculture practically depends upon the exercise of these privileges, and it is exactly here where popular satisfaction should be preferred to revenue.

(4) Apart from a liberal grant of licenses of fire-arms, Government ought to relax the present rigorous restrictions upon the ryot entering the forest for the purpose of pursuing wild animals, who destroy their crops and cattle. In this respect, one feels amused to find the Forest officers guarding their preserve with the same jealousy as the Normans of old who prohibited hunting under severe pains and penalties. The common agriculturist cannot develop into an aggressive sportsman. It is not his business. And supposing people living in or near a forest like to indulge in wild animal-hunting, even as a sport, I do not see why Government should take umbrage at it, or in fact, should not encourage it as a manly pastime. The Forest officer who feels that all the amenities in this

matter are due to him alone, his friends and no one else, has no place under the new conditions, and should be sacked if he would persist in his old selfish tradition. I trust that Government would seriously consider all these grievances, but hope that no settlement would be made behind the back of the leaders of Kanara, and as a usual useless departmental compromise.

#### *Other Districts*

I could go on dealing in the same way with a number of other district grievances, but I have hardly time enough to do justice to them. I would, however, indicate a few in passing. Public opinion in Thana is positively against the threatened partition of the District. The actual partition now proposed is done, moreover, from the point of view of only the District Officer and the convenience of the people is disregarded altogether. The Belgaum people feel keenly the inconvenience due to want of railway communication in its northern sub-Division. They would like to have a railway to Bijapur *via* Athani. They would also have an irrigation canal from the Krishna river to irrigate large tracts of land which are constantly fallow. They also want a resurvey of sub-divisions of land in some Talukas. In Dharwar the feeling seems to be in favour of reservation of at least one seat for the Lingayat community. The Bijapur District would like to have two seats allotted to it in the new Legislative Council. The electorate in the District might come to about 20,000. There is again in the district a keen contest for all civic honours between Lingayats and others. And here too one out of the two seats might be reserved for the Lingayats. The Joint Committee leaves the Government of India a clear, if not a very wide, discretion in the matter of enlarging instead of diminishing representation to rural areas; and I hope the Bombay Government would give one additional

seat to Bijapur. The District also badly wants branch railways for speedier communication between long distances in its arid tracts; and it is to be hoped that the Bombay Government would promptly exercise its powers to allow the District Board of Bijapur to go in for small railways by itself or in combination with adjoining District Boards.

### *Sholapur*

In the Sholapur District the agriculturists in one Taluka (Malshiras) have been threatened with curtailment of the guarantee period of the new revision settlement, from 30 to 10 years. This is obviously most inequitable and entirely subversive of the element of permanency of settlement which alone can induce the agriculturists to make improvements. Would it not be better to simply extend the old settlement rates for another 10 years till a new railway and new irrigation canal actually changed the whole aspect of thing? The Barshi Light Railway Company is a notorious favourite of the Government, and we do not know what heroic measures the Company expects its passengers to take to get redress for even such common grievances that there should be a decent platform at stations and some means to protect passengers from sun and rain. Another complaint from the Sholapur District is about the great distances which people have to travel to get such justice as the law courts can give. I understand that Mr. Justice Hayward has recommended a serious reconsideration of this question and called for reports from the courts themselves. But leaders of opinion in the Sholapur District feel that whether in their own or other districts questions involving public convenience like these should not be decided behind the back of the people. Another grievance of this district would be removed, if resident magistrates could be

appointed at Pandharpur and Kurduwadi as the Chandrabhaga river is an insuperable barrier in the monsoon for the people in the Pandharpur, Sangola and Malsiras Talukas. And lastly, I would mention the question of the Cantonment tenure in Sholapur itself which is a very sore grievance. It does not behove Government to press against the people any rule or law in all its heartless rigour, because it after all is their own creation and the people have never consented to it. It must always be an unequal fight between Government and the people, and nothing is so damaging to the confidence of the people in Government as a disposition in them to take unfair advantage of things to the prejudice of the people.

*Faulty Sanitary Works*

In the Sholapur District, again, the question of water-works of Pandharpur has become very acute. But I would mention that as a grievance not peculiar to Pandharpur alone, but almost typical in some of its unfortunate aspects to the whole presidency. Poona is a co-sufferer with Pandharpur in this respect, and the scandal pertaining to the faulty construction of both its drainage and water-works is too notorious to need detailed treatment here. His Excellency the Governor seems to be taking special interest in the matter, and I wonder what judgment the special expert from England has passed after the inspection that he has made in Poona. For myself I anticipate, from what I have heard, quite a damaging judgment from him, damaging I mean to the reputation of the Engineering Officer who constructed the Poona Drainage Works. Of course I am not concerned with that Officer's professional reputation—if he had a reputation at all. I am concerned with the whole rotten system by which faulty sanitary works are at present turned out as the result of triangular forces—(1) Government bent upon

thrusting costly works upon local bodies under unconscionable pressure combined with allurements of grants, (2) Local bodies too weak to resist plausible but imperfect and ill-digested proposals of Government, though possessing an infallible instinct to perceive that the proposals would ultimately mean their financial ruin and (3) Sanitary engineers who subordinate their professional reputation to their loyal duty to Government and propagate crude, if not totally unscientific, projects to order without looking far off, as they should, into the future of local bodies concerned both from a technical and financial point of view. Without disclosing any confidence I may mention that the Poona Municipality has, in its desperation, even resolved to take Counsel's opinion upon the question whether a local body is under any obligation to repay any instalments of loans to Government in a case in which the original estimates for works done by Government agency were enormously exceeded, and the officer in charge had throughout the progress of the works disregarded the local body, as if it simply did not exist. That is how our local bodies have been bearing the consequences of official responsibility !

*The Land Acquisition Act*

There is one grievance common to the Poona and Ahmednagar districts. It is in respect of the acquisition by Government under the Land Acquisition Act of whole villages together with the agricultural land under them for the purpose of handing it over to capitalist syndicates. The object is no doubt a plausible one, namely, of helping the organisation of a new or the improvement of an old industry in the Presidency. But it is manifestly an improper use of the Land Acquisition Act. It is amusing to see Government develop a socialistic conscience, only when a capitalist enterprise of this nature and on this

scale is to be encouraged. But even if we are prepared to stretch, with Government, the meaning of the word 'public purpose,' we cannot shut our eyes to the enormous hardship befalling thousands of poor agriculturists and workmen suddenly threatened with dishabitation from their hearth and home and complete dislocation of the business of their life. And the onus is obviously on Government to see that the equitable relief given to the compulsarily expropriated peasantry is so ample or overwhelming that they might cheerfully wave their objection to expropriation on strictly legal grounds. It is a question whether the loss of land can ever be adequately compensated otherwise. For it is not a question only of human sentiment associated with immemorial hereditary enjoyment, but a question also of the amenities of home-life which once unsettled are very difficult to re-organise. And then again there is the irresistible question—*Qui bono* who benefits? The benefit really goes only to a few capitalists, who do not share their profits with the public or do not throw their factories or works freely open to apprentices for education. It is a clear case of only a few benefiting at the expense of many. One could understand or agree to this act of colossal expropriation of land, if Government would be prepared themselves to undertake or to guarantee the rehabilitation of the homeless thousands in a new colony, where they might get suitable land in exchange, and money compensation enough to set them on their feet in their own old or a new business. But no satisfactory promise has so far been given by Government in this matter. The agreement of the Company with the Government is not a public document, but there are reasons to believe that Government have therein taken greater care of their own interests than those of the poor peasantry. If the law was ever an ass, it was in the case of this Land Acquisition Act

which puts the owner of the land completely at the mercy of Government and gives him no guarantee for an equitable compensation. The amount of compensation in a case like this would be not the so-called market value of the land in the locality itself, but the amount which represents the power to purchase an equal area of suitable land or land which would give equal profits in another locality. An insistant deputation from Poona that recently waited upon the Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government, seems to have succeeded somewhat in rubbing the injustice of this act of compulsory expropriation into the vitals of that official, but as often happens in cases of this kind once the Government get a foot-hold on the land to be acquired, the acquisition scheme proceeds merrily enough, but the poor peasant proprietor is left unbefriended, has to shift for a new occupation of life and to heavily involve himself in debt with only the distant glimmer of an unascertained amount of compensation to cheer him in the enveloping darkness. My point is that Government should at least see the justice of the claim that no proprietor should be dislodged from his land unless he is given a substantial amount of compensation in cash in hand or a new piece of land chosen by him.

#### *Economic Unrest*

Economic unrest is an important factor in the present provincial situation. Not only high finance, but the prices of even common commodities are beyond our control. Our exchange, our banking, our currency are all influenced by foreign people. These have their own interests to serve, and their interests seriously conflict with ours. Famine no more necessarily means failure of crops. The ruthless profiteer is secretly sucking the blood of the people, and even sensible critics sometimes doubt whether

Government is really doing all it can to stop profiteering within the country or the export of the necessities of life outside it. The middle-class people are being mocked by bumper crops in the fields and are passing through an ordeal of starvation at home. High prices, like the present may indeed benefit some people. But their effect is not beneficial to the society in the aggregate. Looked at through the prismatic medium of high prices, economic India may appear robed in the beautiful colours of the rainbow or studded all over with dangling diamonds, rubies, topazes and turquoises. But it is all an unreal scene conjured up by fatal magic. In this connection I would refer you, ladies and gentlemen, to the excellent paper read before the Conference of the Indian Economic Association in January last by Dr. Mann and Mr. N. V. Kanitkar. After a careful and detailed scrutiny of the economic conditions of two average rural villages, they come to the conclusion that the rise in prices tends only to emphasise economic differences and produce evil effects on the general condition of the rural population. The effects on the urban population must be still more harmful; for, the incomes of most people in the urban area are more or less fixed or inelastic. They lose more than they gain by the rise in prices.

### *Labour Strikes*

The wages in the country have no doubt increased also. But somehow there is severe unrest among the labouring class. The epidemic of strikes is raging furiously. At times their tidal wave threatens to clearly wipe out landmarks of particular industries. Like an infant giant, Indian Labour is just waking up and looking around in wonderment. It will be irresistible as soon as it gets upon its legs and simply begins to walk. The want of organisation of Indian labour is to be regretted. For,



organization, while it would make some kind of strikes more successful, it would make some other kind impossible. The demands of Labour are not standardised on a rational uniform basis, and, in the case of any given strike, the public cannot make up its mind at once whether the strikers are morally right or wrong, whether the demands of the strikers represent a real hiatus between prices and wages, or whether the strike is merely a mad freak of the mob-mind. But though in a few cases the demands of the workmen may be unreasonable, the balance of reason generally inclines towards them, and against the employers. In India the national minima of workmen's wages, safety, sanitation, health, education and profit-sharing are yet to be recognised. And strikes, I am afraid, will be very frequent till that time.

Of course, each strike must be judged on its own merits. I do not mean to say that workmen are above making an unreasonable demand or two. But the triumph of the Bombay strikers is on the whole something more than a mere moral triumph. The concessions actually made showed that the strikers were more in the right and the employers more in the wrong. The proprietors of the Sholapur mills are, I know, generally conscious of their duty towards the millhands and have done a lot to improve their condition. But even supposing their demands were slightly excessive, they had behaved admirably otherwise and did not deserve to be roughly handled or shot at as they were. The Sholapur Collector may indeed claim that he is in good company in this respect, but the public now knows Mr. Simcox is nothing if not a stormy petrel. He can never leave a district without leaving a painful blister behind him. In the case of the present shooting there was hardly any justification for it. A most cogent series of catagorical interrogatives was

presented to Government by the Hon'ble Mr. Paranjapye at the last session of the Legislative Council, and the natural inference to be drawn from them is clear enough, whatever Government may say in reply, to shield the Collector. As for the Hubli strike the workmen have been petitioning the Railway authorities for a very long time, to adjust the relation between the prices and wages, but they got no encouraging or definite reply and an attempt was made to penalise prominent workmen as ringleaders after they had formed a regular union and appointed office-bearers, under the advice of the Mamledar, for properly representing their grievances, and their gratuities were threatened. Here too the workmen have been wholly peaceful and law-abiding, as the Commissioner, S. D., and other government officials would testify. But they are being driven to desperation through starvation for no other fault than that of forming a labour-union. The men, I understand, have finally appealed to His Excellency the Governor for an impartial inquiry into their demands. And I hope His Excellency would be pleased to grant it.

*Arbitration or Bullets ?*

But speaking generally, what will the Government do ? Will it concern itself only with keeping peace and order and answering brick-bats with bullets ? Will it not set up some acceptable and recognised agency of arbitration between masters and men ? It is indeed a moot question, I know, even in Western countries, whether arbitration should be made compulsory by law. Since 1896 Government in England has been intervening in trade disputes by executive action. But the suggestion to make arbitration compulsory on workmen is resented as amounting to a denial of the right to strike and to set a limit to the power of Trade Unions. The guardianship of Labour would in that case be put into the hand of

the State, and Trade Unions would become only semi-philanthropic bodies lacking in effective power of control. In India we have not come to the stage of considering the ultimate rights of Trade Unions, for Trade Unions have hardly made a beginning. Nor have the Indian workmen begun to entertain any of the more ambitious aspirations of their Western brethren. In England, *e. g.*, the ambition of Labour is to dominate the whole industrial situation, and instead of being employed by Capital and Organisation, itself to employ Capital. "It would determine what should be produced, it would hire the Capital and Organisation at fixed rates, and would simply absorb the surplus." Contrast with this the condition of Indian Labour which has at present no higher ambition than to get a wage that would prevent starvation and secure an ordinary decent living. I am aware that economic conditions in India are different from those in England, and that no uniform standard of wages could be thought of for both countries together. But it certainly behoves Government to follow up the principle and policy of factory legislation by creating permanent boards of arbitration instead of intervening only at a late and critical stage of a strike in the name of law and order. Government have a Department of Industries, but as yet no Labour policy. Labour on the other hand must remember that so long as it does not organise itself by developing Trade Unionism, any help that Government may give it can have only a passive or negative value.

*The New Social Democracy*

Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel I must not tax your patience much further with these detailed grievances, though I must thankfully acknowledge that my friends in the moffussil have very kindly responded to my circular

letter and favoured me with material which might engage you and me for another hour. It is possible that some of these questions will challenge the attention of the new Council and fathom the ingenuity of the Ministers. But I shall not try to anticipate any results or hazard any prophecies. For I believe that in the first term of the new Council there will be inevitably much feeling of the way on the non-official as well as the official side. Like wrestlers taking the mental measure of opponents pitted against them in the tournamental arena both the Government and the new popular Councils will proceed somewhat cautiously before locking themselves in a deadly grip. The elections being over, the electors too will more or less occupy the place of wondering, though interested, spectators. But there would be, if they care, ample occupation for them otherwise. The task will be theirs of organising themselves into a political and a social democracy with the help and guidance of their leaders outside the Council, leaving the Council-fight to their representatives within.

Political democracy has a necessary connection with social democracy. They both act and react upon each other. The more homogeneous the Indian Society, the more effective will be the political democracy in the country; also the realisation of true self-government will be easier and quicker. And an efficient political democracy will enable the social democracy to achieve its aims and objects sooner than otherwise. I am not one of those who hold that all theories of social reform must first be carried to perfection in practice before we may claim to have the full power of self-government in our own hands. I am one of those who maintain that Government—at any rate a government composed of rank foreigners—has no right to plead the imperfection in our

social system as their title to retain power in their own hands. Government have no right to say that only a perfect democratic Indian Society, without any barriers of race, religion or caste within itself, can validly claim to divest the European bureaucracy of its absolute power. The Indian people must get self-government whether they are socially perfect or imperfect, fully democratised or only half democratised.

The right of a people to political self-determination does not depend upon the character of their social polity; but upon their inherent right as men to govern themselves well or ill as they might. The Jugo-Slavs, *e. g.*, are regarded for the purposes of self-determination as one nation; but they are composed of three different people—Serbs, Croats and Slovans. The Indian Nation similarly must be treated as one for self-government, though it may be made up of Hindus, Mahomedans, Jains, Christians, &c. And if Hindus and Mahomedans and Christians may together form one Indian nation for political purposes, it does not avail the British Government to inquire how far either the Hindus or Mahomedans again are united or split up among themselves. Can a judge, called upon to grant probate and letters of administration to an estate, say that he will keep the whole property to himself rather than thus hand it over to the petitioners, simply because they would partition the estate among themselves later on, perhaps quarrel over their shares, and ultimately mismanage their several portions? Just as a voter gets his vote simply because he possesses a certain property, or in other words has a certain stake to show, and does not lose the right to it even if he gives the vote to an admittedly worthless candidate, so also a territorial nation and a people is entitled to self-government, because it is a nation or a people, and cannot be divested of that right

simply because it may not administer self-government as efficiently as some other people or nation could do.

But though all that and even more is valid as addressed to our foreign rulers, there is something else which I must say to the people themselves. And what I would say to the Indian people is this:—"You must now reform yourselves socially, not as a necessary title to political self-government, but as a means to govern yourselves well and efficiently." To my own Hindu brethren, in particular, I would say this:—"The good old social system of ours no doubt served a useful purpose in its own time. But the sooner we recognise the fact that it is too antiquated for our present needs the better for all concerned. The standards of economic efficiency as well as the means to attain them vary with times. The old world division of society into practically water-tight compartments of castes is now doomed; as also the old restrictions about particular castes alone pursuing particular occupations. None of course need give up, if he likes, the benefit of the momentum of accumulated hereditary professional culture and industrial acumen. He would be perfectly at liberty, and generally also well advised, to follow his own ancestral profession. But then the point to be noted is that he should now be equally at liberty to follow any other profession as well without any social pains and penalties. The sactimonious character attaching to caste was really an unconscious iron incrustation upon social classification, due to age-long tradition of particular classes following particular occupations. But castes have now lost their *raison d'être*. Consequently their rights as well as duties must undergo a radical change.

I do not mean to say that race-feeling or class-feeling is a thing that can ever entirely disappear in any society. I have seen people in England priding them-

selves upon being English, Scotch or Irish when there was admittedly intermixture of blood at many stages in their ancestry, and the racial pride was, therefore, more groundless than it is in India. I have seen on the English stage dramas in which the prejudice, that still prevails against the merchant class in the mind of the so-called aristocracy, was exhibited for ridicule. But we must remember on the other hand that free unfettered inter-dining and inter-marrying has obviously done much to mitigate the acerbity of the narrow-mindedness of men in the Western countries and to make them fit for co-operation and enterprise.

*The work in India is bound to be slow. For the true Social Reformer wishes to take the Society along with him and does not wish to boycott it or leave it in the lurch. He recognises that social reform is after all not a writing on a clean slate. He recognises that, like a skillful irrigation engineer, he has to give the stream of refined social ideas a gentle bend here and a gentle bend there, in order to maintain a steady but a sure flow towards the lower reaches of the country. He recognises that the true spirit of reform is born in social love, and, therefore, neither reckless defiance nor haughty contempt can be very well its instrument of work. On the other hand even the sensible among the Orthodox take a little time to recognise that reform is not necessarily a reflection against the spirit of any good old custom or practice, but a wholesome reaction only against its abuse and ridiculous exaggeration. The task is, however, ready and the time has now come for a new class of social leaders to come forward and advance the cause of social progress on the basis of a good understanding with both the old and new schools of thought, and a reconciliation of their mutual prejudice.*

And who will take the lead in this matter? The duty devolves upon all, but specially upon the Brahmin as the headman of the old caste-system. The late Mr. Justice Ranade used to say that it is the privilege of the Brahmin to be learned, poor and beneficent. At present he has won an additional privilege, the privilege of being abused. But the Brahmin will remember that no one is abused who is not envied, and that no one is envied who has no precious possession. There is, in my opinion, no more precious possession in this world than to be able to combine learning with self-inflicted poverty. The Brahmin cannot, of course, have things both ways—worldly prosperity as well as respect due to the status of a spiritual preceptor. The Brahmin-hater again must understand that he will gain nothing by heaping abuse on the Brahmin in and out of season. He might do some self-introspection himself and see whether *he* is not the same to the castes below him as the Brahmin above is said to be to him. But praised or blasphemed, righted or wronged, it is pre-eminently the Brahmin's duty to set an example in catholicity of spirit and to lead the society on the path of true Democracy—Democracy, of which the poet has truly sung

“ By misery unrepelled, unawed  
By pomp or power, thou seest a Man  
In Prince or peasant—slave or lord—  
Pale priest or swarthy artisan,  
Through all disguise, form, place, or name,  
Beneath the flaunting robes of sin,  
Through poverty and squalid shame,  
Thou lookest on the *Man* within ”

(April 1920)



## Dr. Tagore in Poona

Speech made by Mr. N. C. Kelkar in thanking Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Prof. Sylven Levi on their visit to Poona.

On behalf of you all I beg to tender a hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Tagore and Dr. Silven Levi. Both of them are highly distinguished visitors and our city may well be proud of having enjoyed the privilege of welcoming them. In honouring them we are but honouring ourselves. Dr. Levi is a great French savant who has devoted the best part of his life to the study of Indiology in its various aspects. He has written a famous treatise on the Indian theatre and he has mastered many other departments of Sanskrit classics. But his greatest contribution to the cause of India is his researches in the traces of Indian literature in Central Asia, China and Tibet. These researches have helped to establish trans-Indian conquest of Indian culture, and to prove that the name of India was, in ages past, greatly cherished by foreign countries as a *premier seat of religion and literature*. Dr. Levi stands for mutual help and mutual recognition between the East and the West in matters of learning. And he may be hailed and honoured as a benefactor of India, because he has rendered valuable services to her, without seeking any selfish purpose and only as a matter of mere scholarly delight.

As for Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, I need not say anything, because there is no educated or even semi-educated man or woman in India who has not heard his name, and also cherished it as a *beloved household word*. To Dr. Tagore belongs, as perhaps it belongs to no one else in this country, the honour of successfully attracting the attention of the whole western world to the national genius

of India as expressed in the art of literature. Of ancient Greece it was truly said that she conquered her conquerors, her weapons being literary culture and artistic taste. Nearly the same thing could be said of India since Sanskrit began to be studied by English scholars. Men like Prof. Max-Müller frankly acknowledged the debt of teachings which England and Europe in general owed to India. In many things had the West to learn at India's feet and the grateful European pupil willingly paid the Guru-dakshana of honest eulogy. But it was reserved to Dr. Tagore to lead Europe as well as America like prisoners in chains behind his triumphal car. The Nobel prize bestowed on him is a laurel that may be valued as adorning even such a hoary head as that of India. Who in this country could hear the romantic accounts of the princely receptions given to Dr. Tagore in far off European countries and in America, without feeling that his contribution to Indian Nationalism has been as valuable as that of any other patriotic son of this motherland, though that contribution may have come through doors unhallowed or untainted as you may like to call it, by politics and polemical strife? It was a fire-eating imperialist, I mean Rudyard Kipling who said, almost in a spirit of mandatory prophecy, that East is East and West is West, and the twain never shall meet. But Dr. Tagore has successfully given the antithetic reply. He has proved that the East cannot only meet the West but even conquer it on its own ground in certain departments of life. But Dr. Tagore has not been unmerciful in his conquest. His scheme of the Vishvabharati is an embodiment of love and friendliness, so far as the pure exchange goes, of culture and civilisation between East and West. Like a true artist he seeks nothing but the blessedness of harmony and union. And in wishing him success in his latest educational ideal we shall be

only wishing India well, in point of the much needed outlet of the pure feeling of human brotherhood which even the most keenly minded amongst us often desire amid the fierce play of our political passions and ambitions.

To you, Dr. Levi and Dr. Tagore, we accord once more a cordial vote of thanks and I ask the meeting to carry it by acclamation.

(1922)

## Evidence Before the C D E. Committee \*

Some select questions and answers

*Pandit Motilal Nehru to Mr N. U. Kelkar*

Q.—It seems to me—I have just been able to glance through your statement—that you would suggest a radical change in the programme of Non-co-operation beginning with change of the name itself ?

A.—Name and definition and also the conditions.

Q.—Don't you think it will entirely change not only the face of the movement but also the heart of it ?

A.—In my opinion the heart will not be touched, it will be strengthened.

Q.—Is not the movement based on the self-suffering and renunciation which it inculcates, and is it not these two things that have appealed to the imagination of the public ?

A.—But I do not take one jot away from the suffering and renunciation. Only I want it to be put very generally without mentioning particular classes. My idea is that it should be left entirely to a man in which particular manner he will take the appeal and in order that as

many as possible may be brought in under this head of suffering, I would rather make the programme comprehensive. I want to make it comprehensive so that as many as possible could be brought under one class, giving different opportunities to different people according to the conditions without making them simultaneous. An opportunity may come to a man at any time.

Q.—But as the programme stands, it does not apply to all men simultaneously ?

A.—My point is that by enumerating a few classes you have made them odious in the public eye. I want a general description to be enunciated in the name of self-sacrifice and renunciation for all people. That will give you what I mean exactly. If you enumerate, enumerate all classes of people. Every man must be given an opportunity of suffering and self-sacrificing, but only particular people should not be asked to make self-sacrifice as in the case of the lawyers.

Q.—Was not the governing principle of the resolution passed by the Session at Calcutta that we have to get at these departments of Government upon which its prestige and power are built and upon that principle certain departments were selected for Non-co-operation ?

A.—But I object to this selection.

Q.—For instance can you give any departments ?

A.—Take the Telegraphs, take the Post Office.

Q.—Do not these departments that you have named, Telegraph and Posts, belong to an advanced stage of Non-co-operation ?

A.—I want you to touch all the departments simultaneously and march onward. Do not put the division vertically but go on putting it horizontally upwards.

Q.—What will be the discrimination if you simply allow each man to do what he thinks in the best interests

of the country ? There must be discrimination between non-co-operators and co-operators. What would be the discriminating mark ?

A.—I think I have put that in one sentence here in my statement—"Even before the advent of the present Non-co-operation, people never made any mistake in distinguishing between the real friends and the real opponents of Government." I say the present enumeration has been useless. You can find people masquerading as Non-co-operators who are not doing anything. How would you eliminate them from the movement ?

Q.—Each item of Non-co-operation stands for a principle, does it not ?

A.—If you will define Non-co-operation I am quite sure I can gain my object. I want you to define Non-co-operation and allow each to carry out Non-co-operation as much as he can. At present Non-co-operation tries to fix the maximum sacrifice on people, but the right policy is to fix a minimum.

Q.—Although there is no hard and fast definition of Non-co-operation, don't you think there can really be no mistake, having regard to the various items, as to who is and who is not a Non-co-operator ?

A.—The mistake does not after all lie so much in things enumerated as in things left out.

Q.—You are aware of the fact that this N. C. O. programme is not an exhaustive programme ?

A.—That is the fault.

Q.—Is it not a fact that you cannot be a complete Non-co-operator with the Government even if you give up every connection with the Government by the mere fact of having to buy even a pie worth of things in the bazar ?

A.—Yes, absolute Non-co-operation is impossible.

Q.—And, therefore, without going to that extreme of rebellion, it is necessary to have a limited programme ?

A.—Not in the manner you have done. There were two courses open, either not to mention any details or enumerate all possible details.

Q.—It is necessary to have a limited programme. You think that the way in which the programme has been limited at present is not desirable ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And that your purpose can be served by putting a limitation ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Let us finish with the programme as it stands. Then the only fault you have to find with the present programme is that it has not succeeded in practice ?

A.—Yes. The fault lies in the enumeration I have referred to. I myself recommend its withdrawal, but even then there may be failures such as you have got at present.

Q.—So that by altering these items as you suggest you do not guarantee success and you do not safeguard against failure even after those changes are adopted ?

A.—Success can be achieved only in a number of years, not within a definite period; perhaps it may take a long time.

Q.—Don't you think that we have achieved just that measure of success in the various items of the Calcutta programme which is proportionate to the effort which we put forth ?

A.—The success you have achieved is due to the general enunciation and definition of sacrifice, but your failure is due to the details as enumerated by you.

Q.—Is not our failure in proportion to the lack of effort in the particular direction in which we planned our programme ?

A.—No.

Q.—You say the success we have achieved in the various items has nothing to do with the effort brought to bear on these general items ?

A.—My point is that you could have avoided the failures if certain details had not been enumerated as you did.

Q.—That is to say we undertook too much ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It appears that you would not object to going into the Councils ?

A.—No.

Q.—That is to say, under existing conditions ?

A.—Even under existing conditions.

Q.—And after going into the Councils you will follow the policy of Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—Responsive Non-co-operation and I have said Non-co-operation wherever possible

Q.—And co-operation ?

A.—I am not speaking of co-operation at all. I am not a co-operator.

Q.—Suppose a beneficial measure is before the Council ?

A.—I may or may not vote for it.

Q.—Do you wish to go into the Council to co-operate or non-co-operate ?

A.—To non-co-operate in the sense of resisting wherever possible. If it is a beneficial measure I may not oppose it.

Q.—But it is Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you expect a majority of Non-co-operators to enter the Councils at the next election if the Congress allows N. C. O.s to enter the Councils ?

A.—A large number of Non-co-operators can get into the Councils, I am quite sure.

Q.—Will there be a majority of N. C. O.s in the Councils ?

A.—I cannot give any assurance as to a majority, but the men who can be relied upon will enter.

Q.—Suppose there is no majority in the Councils ?

A.—There can be resistance even by a minority.

Q.—How can there be effective resistance ?

A.—Though not in the beginning, Government will feel it both inside and outside by and by.

Q.—Any way it won't advance the position more than if we had gone into the Council from the beginning ?

A.—Practically it means we go back to the old times and see what we can do.

Q.—Up to Calcutta I was of the same opinion as you now hold !

A.—Up to Calcutta we were on one side, but after that you changed your view, but I did not change mine.

Q.—Now you are aware of the fact that the *fatwa* of the Ulemas stands in the way of Mahomedans going into the Councils, and those who obey that *fatwa* cannot, according to their religious convictions, go and offer themselves as candidates for the Councils.

Would you advise the Congress to undertake any measure which might take away the Mahomedans from the Congress ?

A.—I would advise the Mahomedans not to introduce religious matters in the Congress which is a national body composed of people of different religions.

Q.—But they are bound to obey the *fatwa* of the Ulemas and abstain from the Councils.

A.—I will try my best to get my Mahomedan brethren to change their attitude. If they still wish to mix up



religious questions with politics. Well, I would go and fall at their feet and beg them not to introduce religious matters in the Congress. I would remind them that there was a time when the Mahomedans in the Congress were also members of the Councils. You know our Shankaracharyas have often regulated their decisions so as to meet the wishes of the people. I am sure our Mahomedan Ulemas could similarly be induced to fall in with the wishes of those who respect and obey their *fatwas*. If we succeed in winning the Mahomedans over to our view, our unity in the Congress would not be endangered.

Q.—Have not the Mahomedans so far as the Congress is concerned, thrown in their lot completely with the Congress ?

A.—I admit it. But the true touchstone has not been applied yet !

*Rajagopalachariar to Mr Kelkar*

Q.—It appears to me that you have reduced the whole matter to a mere question of definition, and your sole object in all the things that you have proposed is so to define Non-co-operators as to include a larger number of opponents of Government in the old orthodox party, real opponents, than the present definition of Non-co-operator does ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And in order to attain that end you don't mind details ?

A.—I do not understand you.

Q.—And you, therefore, think that the clear definition of Non-co-operators should only be to distinguish between the real friends and real opponents of Government ?

A.—Yes. The rest to me is unsubstantial.

Q.—You think the real difficulty is this that there is a large body of real opponents of Government who have

been deprived of their platform or have been compelled to be lukewarm supporters of the N. C. O. movement who are considered as clogs in the machine. Am I correct ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your solution is to so re-define Non-co-operators as to include these people ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You think that entry into the Councils is the substantial question in the triple boycott ?

A.—I think so frankly, but as a matter of self-respect for the Congress I would advise the removal of the boycott of Courts and Schools sooner than the boycott of Councils. For the present, I have been finding that any talk of a change in the Congress resolution is tabooed.

Q.—What would you do with a majority of your own in the Councils ?

A.—If I have a majority I shall at once proceed for a deadlock which may end either in the alteration of the Reforms Act or something else.

Q.—If in a minority, what would you do in the Councils ?

A.—Oppose bad measures and support good measures.

Q.—But that amounts to Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—But do you want me to obstruct any measures good or bad ? What would you ask me to do ? If I can create a deadlock in the larger interests of the country by sacrificing a minor or immediate benefit, I would do so.

Q.—I wish to know whether you agree with me that apart from the vetoes etc., provided in the Government of India Act there is a far more important thing in the Services whereby they have made the Services independent of the Legislature. And really in the transferred subjects, the Services being common, Ministers can exercise

little control. This reduces the power of the Legislature to a great extent in respect of the transferred departments; does it not ?

A.—The presence of a determined body of people in the Councils is a solvent for all the eccentricities of the Act. I also know that in view of the Reforms to be given Government have strengthened their hands on the Services.

Q.—The Services, you are aware, are still carrying on a *determined fight*.

A.—Yes. You will agree that the Councils by themselves will be an additional fighting ground; but if we find that the Councils take away the strenuousness of the fight outside, I would be the last man to go to the Councils.

*Kasturiranga Iyengar to Mr Kelkar*

Q.—Before Non-co-operation was started, the policy of the Congress was what is called Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How long was it tried ?

A.—It did not get a trial at all. It was first enunciated at Amritsar soon after the Reforms. If I remember the words of Mr. C. R. Das and Mr. Tilak aright, they said:—"Still go into the Councils and resist."

Q.—And because the Congress considered that that policy had failed that the policy of Non-co-operation was started ?

A.—But the policy advocated at Amritsar did not receive any trial at all, and Non-co-operation has received a trial for at least 18 months. There is reason for wishing to give such a trial to the Amritsar policy, because whereas in the old days of the Congress there was no elected majority in the Councils, now we have got it.

Q.—And as far as you can see, has not this policy borne good fruit even in the limited time in which it has been in operation ?

A.—Every new movement bears fruit in a geometrical progression, because it gains the momentum of all the previous movements.

Q.—You are a great admirer of the late Lokamanya Tilak ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Has he not advocated boycott of Courts and Schools and of all Government institutions in his speeches ?

A.—No. Throughout his life he fought his cases in the Law Courts because he must have found in practice that he could not do otherwise.

Q.—Even as regards these two items, boycott of Law Courts and Schools, have they not given some good results ? They have given us a number of workers ?

A.—It was a trumpery and temporary affair. I attach no importance to it. The importance of keeping it in the resolution is outweighed by the decided harm done by its retention. Why do you not lay the same ban on doctors, engineers and many other classes ? What has happened is this. Simply owing to the accident of some people being pleaders they have become a laughing-stock. So instead of good-will developing, we are drawing public attention to each other's supposed shortcomings.

Q.—So you think that owing to the present depression in the country entry into the Councils will be useful ?

A.—You are now only taking away from the people one more opportunity for putting up a fight. It must be remembered that fight in the Councils adds so much to the political life in the country.

Q.—When the whole bulk of Hindu opinion is in favour of the movement, what would the Mahomedans do ?

A.—I am sure Mahomedans will come round to our view.

*Cross Examination of Mr. Kelkar by Mr. Patel*

Q.—A witness in Bombay told us that our movement has created a slave mentality in many people in this country. Do you agree with this view ?

A.—I do not agree. I think it is a very good attitude of mind to be loyal to Mahatma Gandhi if one can conscientiously do so.

Q.—You advocate entry into the Councils. Of course you are aware of the corrupting influences in the Council Chamber ?

A.—No. I was not in the Councils myself; but you were, and must know better. The bad type may have been so corrupted but not our best people. If you speak of corrupting influences, then such influences are to be met with everywhere in the world and cannot be avoided.

Q.—You cannot compare, as regards effect, the patronage which Congress organisations can bestow, with that which Government can ?

A.—Even Congress organisations can offer patronage which, however small, is quite as bad in principle for small people as Government patronage for big people.

Q.—Now education has been a transferred subject for two years. Will you let me know why the Minister, Dr. Paranjpe, has not succeeded in advancing education in this Presidency ?

A.—He could not, because of your boycott of the Councils. I think if Mr. Patel had been there, Dr. Paranjpe would have been driven headlong into carrying out Mr. Patel's suggestions.

Q.—I want to know whether any progress has been made in the prohibition of liquor in the Presidency owing to the Reformed Councils.

A.—No progress, but I know that the Congress anti-drink movement has materially reduced the excise income of Government.

Q.—I take it that because of the absence of the Nationalists in the Councils no progress has been made in transferred subjects ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You say that the working of the Reforms by the Moderates has done no good in respect of the transferred subjects ?

A.—Very little.

Q.—I want to know your definite opinion as to whether we shall be able to achieve Swaraj and have our Punjab and Khilafat wrongs redressed by the Non-co-operation movement.

A.—Not by itself alone. If we increase the scope of it, if we increase the field of the followers of Non-co-operation by making it more comprehensive and put on the fight as in the old days, making the party as large as possible—the Congress as only one party—against moderates, there is some chance.

Q.—A better chance ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You would ask the Congress to eliminate Civil Disobedience ?

A.—Certainly not.

Q.—Then Mass Civil Disobedience necessarily ?

A.—Individual Civil Disobedience is perfectly alright.

Q.—Do you think that without a general strike Swaraj is possible ?

that at the back of Mahatma Gandhi's mind there was an advertance to the possibility of a settlement with the Government. That I thought was not an indication of the movement going on indefinitely. He was always looking for a settlement which did not come.

Q.—Whatever the intensity with which the Non-co-operation movement is worked, the idea is to have a settlement with the Government and get Swaraj; it is so stated in the resolution itself. Definite things are told.

A.—Swaraj is mentioned there, but Mahatma Gandhi always used to say 'By Swaraj I mean such as the Congress would determine.' This is something definite.

Q.—If the Swaraj is to come by settlement, it necessarily means Swaraj in the British Commonwealth?

A.—If it is to be by settlement it would be certainly within the British Commonwealth. Otherwise the British cannot agree to a settlement if they (the people) did not remain within the Empire.

Q.—Then at the best, the Non-co-operation movement is intended for the purpose of bringing sufficient pressure to bear on the Government so that it might come to terms?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So that those who were working the Non-co-operation programme with a view to attain independence.....

A.—Of course the creed is exclusive of nothing; from that point of view they are fully correct.

Q.—But so far as Non-co-operation is concerned, the working of the Non-co-operation programme can only get us Swaraj within the Commonwealth by way of settlement and that being the case, those who are working the Non-co-operation programme with a view to get independence are...

A.—No, I think the better contruction would be that if there is any one of that opinion, it is bluff. By putting forward a greater demand, they may be hoping to secure the less one. Who knows what they really think? Even when they ask for independence, it may be a weapon aimed at Government in order to get a settlement.

Q.—Is it possible to get complete independence by this Non-co-operation supposing it is successful—it may be successful for another year?

A.—It is possible, only just as much as everything is possible under the sun.

Q.—If this movement gives 10 p.c. success, it practically means a success also. When we advert to Mass Civil Disobedience, that a parallel Government would be set up, it would mean Independence for the particular area for the particular time. So, those who believe in complete Independence must set about starting parallel institutions?

Pandit Motilal Nehru:—We always hear of the Maratha ditch!

A.—We have ditches everywhere.

Mr. Patel:—With regard to the parallel institutions in this country as they have got in Ireland, all this talk about complete Independence is moonshine?

A.—I regard that a parallel Government is impossible unless it is accompanied by force. Merely a civil parallel Government is not in my opinion possible and, therefore, Non-co-operation, even if it succeeds in setting up some parallel institutions, cannot, unless it is backed up by force which is out of question in a non-violent movement, eliminate Government. You must resort to physical force to gain complete Independence. Beyond this stage the Irish people have not yet reached or want to reach immediately, that is to say, this non-violent movement may be



Council with a Minister responsible to them, not Dr. Paranjpe but Mr. Patel; I want to know from you whether it would not have been possible for the District Board to organise picketing.

A.—I will give an instance myself. Skilfully avoiding the veto of Government, this Municipality allotted funds for picketing. No objection is taken to that. For giving address to this Committee, previous sanction under the Municipal Act was asked for. But the funds for the ceremony were refused.

Q.—Our idea is to work the Constructive Programme. Very well, Mr Kelkar, I want to argue to a certain extent about the visit of the Prince of Wales. That is a very important thing. If the Nationalists were in a majority in the Legislative Assembly and there was a mandate from the Congress that the Nationalists should protest against the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs, do you think the Duke of Connaught would have been able to open the Council? That means simply by refusing to vote you would have got the things all right.

A.—But you know what was actually done in Poona? An address was refused to the Prince in Poona. Similarly with regard to the address given to the Prince of Wales in the Legislative Assembly here and in various Legislative Assemblies.

Q.—And you would have refused large sums of money in the celebrations in honour of the Prince of Wales and perhaps during the last two years the Legislative Assembly has voted new taxation to the extent of 39 lakhs of rupees.

A.—Yes, I think that might have been saved to a certain extent.

Q.—You would have refused to vote?

A.—Yes, if we were in a majority. Even in the minority we would effectively oppose it.

Q.—They are doing decided harm to the country ?

A.—I would not perhaps go so far in criticising them.

Q.—Even if you cannot achieve anything, it is necessary that we should prevent harm being done to our cause.

A.—Of course. The destructive work is the first stroke.

Q.—I want to know one thing. We have unfortunately the Moderates and the Nationalists divided. Now supposing we are successful in capturing the Legislative machinery of the Government and thus are able to oust the Moderates from the Councils, I would like to know from you where they (Moderates) would be in the country?

A.—In their own comfortable homes in the country !

Q.—But do you not agree with me that some of the advanced Moderates would join us ?

A.—Yes. This is the only way to nationalise the Moderates.

Q.—You say that those who are weak Moderates will sit at home ?

A.—Yes, they will be eliminated and the stronger ones will come and join us.

Q.—There will be no two parties ?

A.—They will be within one big party.

Q.—You have already told us that the Council is one of the many methods to attain our end. You will also agree with me that our real work, our real battle-field is the Congress ?

A.—The Congress is not a battle-field. The Council is the real battle-field. The Congress is the recruiting ground.....

Q.—Our real work is that our people in the Congress .....

Q.—Yes, preparing in the Congress and fighting in the Councils.

tor. Do you mean to say that the person who opposes the Government in one particular but supports it in other, can also be a Non-co-operator ?

A man is a Congressman at one time and is not a Congressman at another. We are discussing an extreme case. That reply must go with this reservation only as an extreme case. Suppose a man opposes the Government once in a year.

A.—Just as a man becomes a Congressman by paying four annas !

Q.—Will he remain a Non-co-operator for that year as tolerably as he would be a Congressman ?

A.—No question of toleration or non-toleration.....

A man pays four annas to sign his form and becomes a Congressman for the first time. My answer is this. What is this limitation you fix for one opposing the Government ? So long as the people remember that particular act—anti-Government act—he will be a Non-co-operator.

Q.—Although the people may remember a thousand others.

A.—That which would be uppermost in mind will decide. The criterion will be whether a particular man has done something against the Government or for the Government. For the moment he is a Non-co-operator. I will give a general answer. I go to maxim, "*Saints have a past, and sinners have a future.*"

Q.—If it is your opinion that one act of opposing the Government or any other thing which is enough to make him a Non-co-operator, do you think that you are running the risk of making this whole movement futile ?

A.—As soon as he begins to be a co-operator again, you will drive away that co-operator. You have forgotten the past services of the pleaders. Will you drive them

from the fold ? It is a light of stars lasting for a time. Is Non-co-operation a label to carry to the end of his grave ? To-day he is a co-operator, tomorrow he may be a Non-co-operator. It is a game of sea-saw. "Sinners have a future and saints have a past."

*Hakim Ajmal Khan to Mr. Kelkar*

Q.—Well, the whole Maharashtra and specially Mr. Kelkar have maintained the Boycott of Councils.

A.—I have said openly in this week's Kesari. I have declared it. It is not a question of going out of the Congress, it is not a question of entering into the Councils so long as the Congress does not allow it. You have received my letter. My position is exactly what I wrote to you in that letter. In return I would ask this that preaching of these views ought to be tolerated. One thing is certain that if the Congress confirms the boycott, you cannot remain in office. As regards the Provincial organisation, it is a matter for the elector and me, not even for this Committee. I may resign to-morrow or the electors may throw me out.

Q.—Mr. Kelkar, having regard to the rule that in the representative institutions where the majority prevails, is it open—do you think it is open—to the office-bearers who may share in a minority-view to preach their view as such office-bearers ?

A.—This is not a cabinet business. I do not admit that even all the Congress Presidents put together are a cabinet.

Q.—Then have you considered what the result of such a procedure would be when the office-bearers of the Congress go and preach against the mandate of the Congress which is given by the majority ?

A.—I do not regard every resolution as a mandate.

Q.—Would you not preach it ?

A.—It is a matter of common sense. It is not a matter of rule.

Q.—Is it proper for office-bearers of the Congress to go against the majority view of the Congress ?

A.—Certainly, otherwise how can changes be brought in the resolutions ? The electors will throw me out if they think it is necessary.

Q.—But I want to know your view.

A.—It varies with localities in different conditions.

Q.—If each province has different views, some in favour and the others against, and if each province preaches its own view what would become of the prestige of the Congress as a whole and the object ?

A.—I cannot give a general answer to it.

Q.—Different component parts go on pulling in different ways ?

A.—Your objection is only to the office-bearers. I can see that the better course for the officials would be not to remain in office.

Q.—Even if the majority of the electors want them ?

A.—Yes, I would say even.

Q.—There should be a rule debarring ?

A.—That rule is not necessary. It is a question of propriety. That may be settled between the electors and office-bearers. The question is of the right of the Congress to interfere with the right of electors.

Q.—What is the object of your trying to secure unity between different sects, Hindus, Parsees and Musalmans.

A.—To secure maximum common effort to push on the cause of Swaraj.

Q.—Do you think that object can be gained if the office-bearers of the Congress Committees go against the majority view of the Congress ?

A.—If the electors think that a particular man should remain in office, then the Congress has no right to say how the matters are governed in that particular province. If it means to do away with a man who expresses a view in any way opposed to any part of the Congress, he should not remain in office. The Congress is competent to do that. The Congress should consider twice and so long as it has not passed such a rule, it is a matter between the electors and the office-bearers.

*Dr. Ansari to Mr. Kelkar*

Q.—Do you recommend the removal from the Non-co-operation programme of certain items? I ask you, after the removal of these items from the programme what would remain of the Non-co-operation programme?

A.—I define Non-co-operation. *In my statement I have defined it.* Resistance by every man in every possible way. These things remain, details go

Q.—After the removal of these items, Non-co-operation still remains?

A.—It remains. I do not think there is any inherent objection to these details. They are not undesirable, but you should not mention them so specifically making them integral parts of a particular resolution.

Q.—Would you make a general opposition to Government in all possible ways?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What would be then the difference between the position of the Congress after Non-co-operation and before the Non-co-operation programme was taken up?

A.—My meaning of Non-co-operation is the resistance, which was contemplated by the Congress before Non-co-operation was taken up.

Q.—In other words you go back to the position which the Congress had before Non-co-operation was taken up?

A.—After Amritsar and before Calcutta.

Q.—It has been noted that insistence on hand-spun and hand-woven cloth as a matter of fact indirectly induces also the sale of mill-made cloth. So what would you gain by removing that insistence ?

A.—The difference is, I want preaching and not insistence. If you are going to make it as a point of discipline, I do not like it ; if you induce people to do it, I will welcome it. But you are coercing the people.

Q.—Are the people coerced ?

A.—Your insisting upon it as a condition for office-holding. I object to it. A man may be a good fighter in other respects, he may only wear mill cloth. He may wear pure Khaddar or he may wear mill-made cloth.

Q.—You mean the same restriction, when you talk of the condition of the pledge regarding the volunteers ? You mean the wearing of Khaddar ? Is that the only objection you have ?

A.—I object to everything in the way of coercion.

Q.—You object to certain conditions in the pledge ?

A.—I have said that a pledge should be that a volunteer should remain non-violent so far as his duty is concerned.

Q.—That is to say you will allow him violence in self-defence ?

A.—You are putting it grotesquely. Violence is not the word to be used. Do not make a fetish of Non-violence also.

Q.—Sufficient physical force, would that satisfy you ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Sufficient use of force to overcome violence ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There is no difference !

A.—Then accept my view. You are making a fetish of the words. I don't want that.

Q.—In one part of your statement, you say that it is felt that the Khaddar agitation is slightly overtainted with the spirit of Pan-Islamism. What did you mean?

A.—I cannot think of the Kabul Army to win Swarajya. I believe after all that this question of Indian politics must be solved in India by Mahomedans and Hindus together.

Q.—Do you think that the Khilafat agitation has tried to get outside influence to invade us?

A.—Mr. Mohomad Ali said it in one or two cases. If I am wrong I am subject to correction. Kabul or Persia, if they invade India, I would be the first person to condemn it.

Q.—Is that the only thing?

A.—Yes, the tendency is there to get outside influence and power to arbitrate in matters of Indian politics.

Q.—No, I beg your pardon. Khilafat agitation has got absolutely nothing to do with this. In fact it has simply to defend the Islamic countries against the aggression of the European powers, nothing else.

A.—I should be very happy if you give me an assurance from responsible leaders.

Q.—I think it is in the interest of the Asiatic races and indirectly also of India.

A.—I will accept your explanation.

Q.—As regards Civil Disobedience, you say that Mass Civil Disobedience, the provinces are not ready for it, but Individual Civil Disobedience, there are individuals who can take it up?

A.—I think if there is a unanimity upon a subject-matter of Civil Disobedience, you can bring into the field, I suppose a thousand, or two in this city. In the



liquor campaign, 500 people broke the law and were actually prosecuted.

Q.—And they would be ready to take up even the extreme form of Individual Civil Disobedience ?

A.—I do not think, so far as imprisonment goes, any teaching is wanted. They are ready already.

( Poona, 20 July 1922 )

### Tribute To Pandit Nehru

On Thursday, 5th inst., Mr. T. C. Goswami, the whip of the Nationalist party in the Assembly, gave a banquet to a large company in honour of Pandit Motilal Nehru. Such a function was proposed to be held at Delhi itself at the end of the March session. But it had to be put off owing to Panditji being called away to Allahabad rather unexpectedly. The function at Simla made ample amends for the omission at Delhi. The gathering was large and a number of speeches were made to support the toast to Panditji's health by Mr. Goswami, Mr. Kelkar, Mr. Rang Aiyer, Mr. Kafirudin Ahmed, Mr. Rushbrook Williams, Sir Manekji Dadabhai, Sir Dev Prasad Sarvadhikari, Mr. Dip Narayan Singh and others. The following is the report of Mr. Kelkar's speech which was punctuated with laughter and cheers.

#### *Mr. Kelkar's Speech*

Mr. Goswami and Gentlemen,

I wish heartily to join in the toast to the health of the guest of this evening and the President of the Swarajya Party in the Legislative Assembly—Pandit Motilal Nehru. I have come into personal contact with Panditji for the last three years, and I am glad to have this opportunity of

paying to him my tribute of admiration and appreciation, which I may do with a personal as well as a political touch.

*Panditji before 1919*

If I remember right, I first heard the name and fame of Pandit Motilal in 1907 in connection with a lecture by Mr. G. K. Gokhale at Allahabad under Panditji's chairmanship. He was then described to me by an Allahabad friend of mine in various ways. The Pandit was, according to him, the leader of the Allahabad Bar and second to none in influential advocacy. He was, again, the first citizen of Allahabad, a merry millionaire and natives' nobleman. The language of exaggeration is perhaps a weakness and a foible of our people in India, but I distinctly remember my friend telling me that Panditji was so fastidious in his tastes and costly in his habits that he actually used to order his washings as well as wines from Paris. Since then I occasionally read a reference to him in the leading daily of Allahabad.

But in my view he first came into prominence as a public spirited patriot in connection with the non-official inquiry into the Punjab atrocities. Later on I had a nearer view of him as President of the Amritsar Congress, and I vividly remember the incisive criticism he made upon the Montford reforms in his presidential address. At Calcutta in 1920 I had the privilege of being one of his opponents as he advocated the boycott of Councils; and later on we knew him as the right-hand man of Mahatma Gandhi. His renunciation of a princely income as an Advocate made a very deep impression upon my mind, and I said to myself that the maxim, that "Saints have a past and sinners have a future" was true, when in one of the issues of *Young India* I read a beautifully written but indiscreetly published letter of Panditji to Mahatmajī in

which the Panditji had described the joys and virtues of a life of asceticism, in the Naini Tal hills. A new era, however, opened with the appointment of the Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee: and I now recall with peculiar interest the severe cross-examination to which he submitted me on the question of Council-entry and Responsive Non-co-operation. In the closing sentence of the address which I gave to Panditji, as President of the Poona Municipality, I remember to have expressed a hope that he would give correct guidance to the country as the result of the important inquiry; and my hope and expectation came true. We have had since then, in the person of Panditji, a convincing example of the proposition that personal loyalty and affection are fully compatible with the keen differences of opinion and even antagonism in political principles and practice.

*Leader of the Swarajists*

Since the formation of the Swarajya Party we have all come into personal contact with Panditji, and you will all bear me out when I say that in Panditji we have both a strenuous Secretary and a capable Commander after our own mind. When I see the energy and the spirit which the old man has been putting into his work, in both these capacities, I believe that his middle age, though spent in apparent ease and indolence must have been providentially reserved for us as a storage battery, from which to derive in the cold and dark hour of our need, an almost inexhaustible supply of both warmth and light. He has commanded our respect as a leader in the same full measure as he has earned our personal regard and attachment. He combines in his personality the dignity of a manly man, the accomplishment of a wily woman and the sport of a cheerful child.

*No-changers and Pro-changers*

With the enforced parting of their company, both No-changers and Pro-changers are faced with a crisis peculiar to their conditions. The position of neither is such that it may be envied by the other. The Pro-changers may be sought to be driven first out of the Congress itself. But the pillars as well as the Cater-pillars of the No-change party will not escape trial in their own way. But without giving a thought to the plight of the No-changer, we Pro-changers have enough and to spare of work by way of concentrating public attention and interest in the Legislatures and making them centres of political resistance. In that work we fortunately possess a leader like Panditji, and we can depend upon him to lead us to success, provided we render unto him all the loyal and well-disciplined allegiance of which we may be capable.

Gentlemen, I join with you in the happy toast and I wish Panditji long life and success in his mission.

(Simla, 15 June 1924)

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## **The All-India States' Subjects' Conference, Delhi**

### *Presidential Address*

Gentlemen,

I thank you for asking me to preside over this Conference of representatives and well-wishers of Indian States. I trust that, before dispersing, our deliberations will lead to the formation of an All-India Organisation for agitating the question of the establishment of responsible government in the States' territories.

Though I have spent the greater part of my life in British India and am a subject of the British Government,

But even this attitude of mind has been overpowered by the innate love, which the people have cherished towards Indian Princes and Chiefs. For they are regarded, and rightly regarded, as the 'Noah's Ark' of indigenous Indian Aristocracy, which survived the red flood of British domination that has overspread the whole of India. In that Ark have been preserved the remnants of Indian Nobility which, in certain cases, traces its origin to even pre-historic ages. The ideal of responsible government or Political Swarajya is consistent with the highest authority and power of administration remaining in the hands of the true sons of the soil as opposed to Foreigners. And the truest democrat would only be pleased, if he ever found the scions of Indian Nobility graciously condescending to use their natural status and authority not like irresponsible tyrants, but like leading figures or beneficent agents in representative forms of government. Who would not delight in giving them the *Hommage* and *Love* for the services that their ancestors have rendered to the cause of the glorification of India? Also what a golden opportunity for them to enter into the new spirit hovering over the land, and setting an example of peace, contentment and progress among their subjects for the benefit of the British rulers who, however enlightened, must always remain apart from the Indian people in interest as oil and water! I confidently assert that, if by any imaginable process, the inner heart of even the severest critic of Native Rulers could be cut open, it would assuredly disclose therein a tender spot susceptible to conscious or unconscious partiality for Indian Princes and their welfare and advancement.

But unfortunately this Noah's Ark of Indian Nobility presents an unpleasant variety of preserved seeds of life. Along with good human beings, it contains also some

specimens of beasts and creeping things, which it would never be in the interest of mankind to live and flourish as they are doing. On the other hand, the treaties between Indian Princes and the British Government are being regarded as the Solemn Covenant established by God with Noah. The progress of annexations was fortunately arrested by the Indian Mutiny, in which thousands of true lovers of Native Rule lost their lives. But far from our Princes and Chiefs showing any gratitude to their faithful subjects for this service, they have been using the position, so secured to them by vicarious sacrifice, for only tightening their grip of irresponsible power over their subjects. The Biblical words have painfully come true:—

"And God blessed Noah and his sons and said unto them: Be faithful and multiply and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth on the earth and upon all the fishes of the sea. *Into your hand are they delivered.* Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. Neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."

*Feudal Aristocracy of England*

And is not the Protection of the Princes Act, like the elusive rainbow, the token of this Covenant? No wonder if this Noah, safe and secure, and being able to plant a vine-yard "drank of the wine and was drunken and was uncovered within his tent." Is it not an irony of Fate that the pride and affection of the subjects of the Native States for their Rulers should be in many cases rewarded only with oppression and humiliation? The Indian Princedom is very much like the feudal aristocracy of England. It had, in a number of cases, its beginning in the warriors, the companions, and the Thegns who were personally

attached to the King's war-band and received estates from the Folkland in reward for their personal services. "The kins of their lord invested them with land or fief to descend to them and their heirs for ever." No one grudges the Indian Princes their possessions and the memory of their old feudal glory. But they should be wise enough to pursue the parallel a little further, and see the fate which overcame the feudal lords in England. Some of the English Dukes and Earls and Marquesses no doubt still continue in the enjoyment of an integral portion of their hereditary possessions. But their feudal power over their vassals has been completely shed and shattered, and they are now content to remain silent spectators of the political drama of Democracy, if they cannot themselves play any suitable or useful part in it by virtue of their talents and education. Similarly also no one in India would feel jealous of the richness of revenues or the favoured natural position in society, falling to the lot of our Princes and Chiefs, if they, on their part, could only be content to divest themselves of full regal power and authority over the lives and properties of their subjects, or at least to share it in proper proportion with the chosen representatives of their subjects. But they strenuously refuse to do so professing to believe, in this twentieth century of grace, in the old-world principle of the Divine Right of Kings.

#### *Quarrel for Natural Rights*

In India there are landlords and zamindars whose revenues, in some cases, exceed those of some of the Indian States. Also some of the Bombay and Calcutta merchants are so wealthy that they could purchase some of our Indian States outright and put them into their pocket. But no public complaints are heard about them, and no organisation sought to be set up for making them amenable to

responsible government. The reason is quite obvious. A rich zamindar or merchant is not hated, so much as even a poor Prince, because the former can commit no crime against society, except perhaps living in undue luxury, or wasting his own precious life. He cannot lord it over anyone, except perhaps his personal servants, the meanest among whom, however, can vindicate his freedom or honour against his master in a territorial court of law, if the master exceeds the limits of his proper authority, which is not based on any status but is only a matter of free contract or agreement. The prejudice discernible against rich people is only an expression of popular opinion upon an unbalanced, and, therefore, injurious, distribution of wealth in society; but it is by no means a political movement. The case is otherwise with Princes and Chiefs. Individually, there may be people in Native States, richer in point of wealth than even the Chiefs themselves. But the Prince or Chief is such, not by reason of his wealth, but by reason of the legal powers he enjoys owing to his status and apart from any consent of the people who are called his subjects. Thus, while claiming an unchallenged right to levy any taxes or imposts upon them, the Princes and Chiefs can use the entire State revenues at their sweet will, can enact and enforce any civil or criminal laws governing them, can be the sole arbiters of their affairs as judges, and can inflict upon them any penalty up to death or forfeiture of property. The quarrel, therefore, as between an Indian Prince and his subjects, is not a quarrel based upon an economic theory or issue, but a quarrel relating to the natural rights themselves of man. The necessity of enforcing a sense of responsibility upon Indian State's Rulers is in direct proportion, not to their incomes, but to the sovereign powers they enjoy over the lives, or properties of the peo-



ple under their authority. There is, therefore, no spirit of Bolshevism or Communism in the movements of the Indian States' subjects, but only the chaste and proper spirit of the Swarajya movement, which seeks nothing but a proper adjustment of the political rights of the Rulers and the ruled, apart from the right of everyone among the ruled to fulfil his life as a free human being.

### *Need of Representative Institutions*

In pretending to be full sovereigns the Indian Princes and Chiefs are only deceiving themselves. The great public, however, cannot be deceived as to the real situation; for these very well know and realise that an Indian Prince, though he claims Divine Right of Kings over his subjects, is a helpless tool in the hands of the British Government. Friends, Colleagues and, therefore, equals of the British Government only in name or theory, the Princes and Chiefs are as much at the mercy of the British Government as the Indian States' subjects are at the mercy of these Chiefs and Princes. And I dwell on this painful aspect of the situation not because I delight in their humiliation, but because I want them to come round to a sense of justice. If they know what it is to feel the touch of the arbitrary power of the British Government, they should also know what it must be for their subjects to feel the touch of their own arbitrary authority. A touch of nature, it is said, makes the whole world kin; and I remind the Indian Princes and Chiefs of their servile position under the British Government only to plead for a better treatment of Indian States' subjects at their own hands. If not being content with their already exalted position, they want the establishment of bodies like the Narendra Mandal and the Chamber of Princes to share in the rights and privileges of the supreme British Government,

how much greater should be the need of the Native States' subjects for the establishment of representative institutions in their States, through which they may exercise some little check or control over the expenditure of their revenues and the general administration of their affairs ?

*Western Fashions of Princes*

It is no valid reply to the demand for responsible government in Native States to say that the idea of such government is foreign to the genius of the Indian people. If the rest of India, under the changed conditions, is trying to realise a new model or plan of political government, the Native States also will have to follow suit. The two are so indissolubly and vitally connected, though desperate attempts are being made to keep them exclusive and separate. After all human nature, in both the British territory and the Native States, can be divided by nothing but a purely imaginary line, which also divides these two territories. And are not the Princes and the Chiefs themselves indulging in habits and tastes, arising out of foreign culture ? Do they not take pride and glory in being up-to-date in out-landish fashions, furniture and frivolities ? No Prince now-a-days feels happy without visiting Europe as his ancestor did not feel happy if he did not visit the holy place of Benares. Do not some of the Indian Princes spend lakhs and lakhs of rupees of their income in touring and travelling in foreign countries ? Do they not affect to regard England as their home ? His Highness the Maharaja of Alwar the other day felt complimented when Lord Curzon profusely praised the style of his finished speeches in English. With this evidence of their own predilection towards western ideals, how can Indian Princes blame their subjects, if they too betray a partiality for western ideals of political government ?

*Modest Dimensions of States*

Then, again, the modest dimensions of Native States are sometimes advanced by their Rulers as an argument against the introduction of political Reform in their States. But here, again, the logic is faulty, because it is interested. The Native States may be small in point of territorial extent, subjects, population, and income and expenditure, when compared with the British Government. But if these small dimensions cannot militate against the claim of Native Princes to be full sovereigns, why should they militate only against the introduction of representative institutions which, after all, are a limitation of the rights of sovereignty and, therefore, do not need greater space for their play than the sovereignty itself. If a Prince or Chief thinks his estate big enough to play the lawful Cæsar therein, it must be regarded big enough also for the representative people in the State to play the role of a periodically elected Legislative Council, or an *ad hoc* jury empanelled to sit in judgment over their peers. The name Legislative Council does not denote, throughout the world of well-regulated States, a particular fixed number of legislators or connote a particular fixed standard of culture and education amongst its members. The quality of laws which the Council will make will in any case, be commensurate with the quality of the people for whom laws are made. Also if a petty, uncultured Ruler is not ashamed of making laws by his mere breath, as if they were the natural secretions of his political body, he need not also be ashamed of having around him a Legislative Council of a few representative subjects, though these may be neither so eloquent nor so acute in legal thought as some members of the Governor's or the Viceroy's Legislative Council. If he can be himself the King, the High Court, and the War-lord with unlimited powers, his sub-

jects also can be legislators fit enough to make good laws for themselves.

*Difficulties and Limitations*

We all recognise the Indian Princes and Chiefs have their own difficulties and limitations. In some cases their revenues are inadequate for the extent and scope of their administration. In some cases their territories are scattered and administration over them is disproportionately costly. As a rule they cannot afford to remunerate their servants in such measure, as may do credit to the high-sounding offices they hold and the important functions they actually discharge. The small always suffer in comparison and look contemptible when they are held on the back-ground of the large and the affluent. And the Indian Princes are indeed often held up to ridicule, simply because their resources are small. But the Princes themselves contribute in a large measure to this ridicule; for it is not really their petty realms but their pompous pretensions that make them a laughing-stock. A little humility and a wide out-look on life surrounding them, would save them from ridicule and make them more helpful than many a political leader in British territory in giving a concrete shape and form to the ideas of liberalism which are in the air. With all our tall talk about elected Legislative Councils, Transferred Departments, and Responsible Ministers, we are yet far away from the operative lever of practical administration. The Old Guard of the British Civil Servants is still in the way, jealously guarding the approaches to political power like the proverbial serpents guarding secreted treasures in the neglected or forgotten vaults of ruined palaces. In Native States, however, an Indian can hope and also have the wherewithal to work out political reforms, and legitimately satisfy to the fullest extent the ambition to mould the

administration according to the popular will. A liberal and enlightened Ruler can, if he means to, set up an example of good government and responsible government at the same time, which may be the despair of British subjects for a long time to come.

*Popular Democratic Touch*

The movement for responsible government in Native States is of course of very recent origin. The ideas of representative government in the British territory itself date from the time of the birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885. And even for many years thereafter the popular demand had confined itself to small reforms in administration and only a partial Indianisation of the Public Services. On the other hand, in the Indian Native States the administrations were, as a rule, all Indians; and a passive government can always be easily mistaken for good government. It was not till 1917 that we in British India began to talk of complete Swarajya or responsible Self-government. On the other hand, our inborn respect for Indian Princes and Chiefs easily overshadows even our love of responsible government, and I can name a number of prominent Congressmen to-day, who regard it as a great sin or at least a political blunder even to touch the question of Native States, lest we may make the position of Indian Princes untenable, give a handle to the British Government to interfere in their affairs more than before and even imperil the existence of the time-honoured and well-beloved indigenous aristocracy, remaining to us as the only consolation in our miserable plight under British rule and a happy reminder of the golden age of true Indian Rajasthan. I am sorry I cannot agree with the view. In my opinion the popular democratic touch will only help the redemption of Indian States and their subjects from their present God-forsaken condi-

tion, in which an Indian Prince, being himself a puppet, in the hands of the British Government, seeks to make up for it by treating his subjects as puppets in their turn. The democratic movement does not demean, but only ennobles those whom it touches with its angelic wand, and I for one would not support this movement, if I did not honestly believe that the introduction of responsible government in Native States would, while giving to the States' subjects their due in point of political freedom, will also strengthen the hands of their rulers in their struggle with the foreign sovereign power in the land. While we want an Indian Prince to be less drawn up, severe and tyrannical towards his subjects, we want him to be more straight-forward, erect, unbending, spirited and self-respectful towards the British Government. We want the name and the title of an Indian Raja to be no longer an embodiment of favoured folly, protected poltroonery, lawless loot, and well-varnished vanity. For their own ends the British Government treat Native States as a back-water in which pestilential weeds may thrive as a contrast to the cultivation of popular government in the British territory. And the Indian Prince they treat like a hunting hawk on their wrist, fondled and hoodwinked only that he may kill their *shikar* with deadly vengeance when set free to act. We want to change all that. We want to wholly turn the face of the Indian Prince, to make him a loving brother to his subjects and a tough opponent to the British Government along with them in their struggle for political freedom.

#### *An All-India Organisation*

The Congress, while keeping itself aloof from intervention in the internal affairs of Native States, has just taken cognizance of the Native States so as to bring the human element in that sphere generally in a line with the

political aspiration prevailing in British territory. The Congress really desires that, though the people in Native States may not be severely cut off from Congress politics, they should more usefully devote their energies to work for their own salvation under the rule of Indian Princes. It wants Native States' subjects to do and dare in the same manner and measure as British subjects have done to come to their present position. Situated in small jurisdictions, where they are in the grip of irresponsible tyrants, their task is of course not so easy. But they must also remember that there is a limit beyond which mere outside help would not carry them successfully in their struggle. They must be prepared to stand up openly on the soil itself of Native states, proclaim what they want and organise themselves for achieving it. Outside in the British territory there will always be public opinion ready and attuned to act as a big resonance-recorder. The Press in the British territory has already done a good deal to voice the feelings and aspirations of Native States' subjects. But no concrete results can be expected unless they force the issue with their own hands in their own States. In the meanwhile it will be our duty to provide an All-India organisation which while befriending the bold efforts of workers in hopeful States, may go on injecting the leaven of the movement and providing stimulus for action in hopeless ones. Spontaneous beginnings of the new movement have been visible in Gujerath, Kathiawar, Southern Mahratta Country and Northern India. But it requires both more extensive and intensive work to produce tangible results. It is rightly estimated that an All-India Native States Conference, holding its sessions periodically, if not annually, would afford the movement both the magnitude and the altitude necessary for attracting the attention of the whole

country towards it. But for obvious reasons the idea has not yet taken a concrete shape. In March 1922 we in Poona and Bombay had formed an association to hold such an All-India States' Conference in Bombay in the month of August following. But it was represented to us that Delhi would be a more suitable place for such a Conference and that arrangements were being made for its session in January or February of 1923. The appearance of plague in Delhi, however, upset the plan; and notwithstanding the present Conference which, in its nature, is a small because a hurried gathering, we are as far from a real All-India States' Conference as ever. The Congress sessions easily suggest themselves as appropriate for the session of this Conference also. But personally I do not hold that view. Most of us feel too much hustled and worried, during the days of a Congress session to devote any patient attention to an extra Conference like this. In my judgment the Conference must be quite a separate event by itself lasting over two or three days, when the public attention is not likely to be shared by other proceedings in India. My friend Mr. Shandilya will perhaps take my suggestion into consideration and arrange for a Conference at Delhi in February or March next, when the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State will be in session, and when, therefore, with due notice of a month or so a gathering of picked representatives of Native States throughout India may easily be attracted to that place.

Gentlemen, I have done. This is a new movement in which we are taking part. It is a movement in which pros and cons are mixed up in a greater measure than in the Congress movement. But I would ask you to insist with me that the name of a Native State should not, simply because it is a name so dear to us, be allowed to



cover a multitude of political sins. For though a subject of a Native State, a Man is 'man for all that,' and he must also, therefore, be emancipated. (21-9-1925)

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### Native States' Conference, Belgaum

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have been pleased to elect me to be the President of this Indian States' Conference. I sincerely thank you for the honour you have done me. You also have thereby done me a service. For you have given me one more occasion to express my views on a much neglected question. I mean the question of freedom and rights of the people of Indian States. I know something already about the conditions of people of the States and principalities in the Maharashtra. And I hope to profit on this occasion by learning something about the state of things in other parts of India, especially the Karnatak.

This Conference is only one among the many subsidiary or auxiliary engagements fixed up at Belgaum for the Congress week. No wonder that it should attract only a small fraction of public attention. But I claim that none of the other conferences has got that political character which this Conference possesses. I say this not because I happen to preside over this Conference, but because this Conference is to the people of Indian States what the National Congress is to the people of British India, from the point of view of political Swarajya.

I have said that the condition of the Indian States' people is a neglected question and I say so advisedly. It is suffering from a threefold neglect. The British Government neglect it on the technical and plausible ground that

they ought not to interfere with the liberty of administration granted by treaty or custom to Indian Princes and Chiefs. The subjects of Indian States themselves neglect it because they have no capable and self-sacrificing leaders and also because they come face to face with repression within very close limits as the result of any political movement. But an equally marked and yet more inexcusable neglect is that shown by the National Congress.

We need not wonder at the British Government turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to the condition of Indian States. For their own pleasure and interests coincide with the seeming observance of obligations to political friends and allies. Are not Indian States the happy hunting grounds to high-placed English officials both in a literal and metaphorical sense ? A pearl necklace or a set of beautifully carved ivory furniture is as apt as a pair of lions to fall to a sporting European adventurer in an Indian State. The resources of Indian States are really more unreservedly at the service of the Empire than those of even British subjects. Are not the backward Indian States a good background for the achievements of the civilised British Government to shine upon ? Why should they not let the sleeping dogs of rights of States' subjects lie as they are ? It is enough for them, the trouble and worry they have on hand already about the Swarajya movement in their own territory !

The plea that the British Government cannot interfere with the freedom of administration of their political friends and allies must be taken with a big discount. This is straining at a small constitutional gnat when whole non-constitutional camels are easily swallowed. It is an illustration of the sarcastic saying दिश कारुवाजीता राक्षी तानि नर्मदाम् । The prudish coquette in the parable affected horror when at full noon she heard the croaking of a crow as if she were

alarmed by the presence of an unannounced stranger in her bed-room. But she had no scruple and had all the necessary courage to swim across the broad waters of the Narmada river at dead of night to meet her lover. In the same manner the paramount government refuses to openly entertain complaints of Indian subjects about mal-administration in Indian States; but in secret it can do any number of unrighteous things towards their rulers in their own interest. Treaties in black and white can be misconstrued and given an undreamt of meaning. Novel doctrines of lapse and escheat can be introduced at will in practice. The Hindu right of succession to Gadi by adoption can be withdrawn. Disadvantageous conditions can be imposed upon a minor Prince as the price of his investiture with full powers of administration in his attaining the technical age of majority. Land in Indian States can be acquired for foreign railway companies at a nominal price; and their rivers can be bunded so as to deluge whole villages in State territory in order that irrigation canals drawn from them may benefit the British rayat and add to British revenues. Licenses may be acquired for foreign capitalists to dig out and export rich mineral resources of Indian States on payment of a nominal sovereignty. The States can be subjected to the loss of profits of coinage in the name of commercial convenience, and easy bargains can be driven with them in respect of purchase of special monopolies.

As for the personal treatment of Indian Princes, one can only imagine what may happen behind the *parda* when the gulls, the cowards, the simpletons, among them come face to face with political officers accomplished in state-craft in its seductive aspects. Even the more spirited among them have tales to tell of how they fared under the rack or the thumb-screw of a haughty tamer on occa-

Indian States and the paramount government. Surely there are more weighty problems than horse-breeding, upon which 'the Indian' Princes should take counsel among themselves or with the British Government. If the big Princes feel too proud to personally mix in the motley crowd of crowns and coronets, they may consider the question whether instead of a Chamber of Princes there should be a Chamber of Chancellors or Ambassadors. But personally I think the big Princes who are holding aloof from the Chamber are making a sad mistake. They should copy a page from the leaders of the Indian peoples who sit in the Councils and Assembly and work together, though they materially differ in their wealth, status or social position. But I do not wish to dwell on this topic at any length. I sympathise with the Indian Princes and feel that their legitimate rights as friends and allies are being gradually ignored by the paramount Government. But leaving them to the spur of their self-interest for remedying the position. I would content myself with putting my finger on that defect of the Chamber of Princes which relates to the interests of "the States People." And I would rather have the Chamber abolished summarily if the question of Popular Government in Indian States is ever to be tabooed therein.

Even apart from the Chamber of Princes I regret to find that the Indian Princes profess to be free from all obligations to their subjects in respect of the grant of real Representative Political Institutions. Even the enlightened leader of the Chamber, I mean the Maharajah of Bikaner, is seen to draw a subtle distinction between the rights of the people in British India and of the people of Indian States in respect of Swarajya. His contention may be true that in the Indian States there is more Home-Rule than is generally supposed, but that, only so far as the

indigenous or native character of the agency of Government is concerned. But in respect of institutions which may voice the opinion of the subject people, the claim must be disallowed. In that respect in British India we have certainly made greater advance, for the theory of personal 'Mabapism' has been completely knocked down on the head there, and our fingers are eager and struggling to clutch at the prize of responsible ministries and chancelleries in the Imperial as well as the Provincial Governments. And if an enlightened ruler like the Maharaja of Bikaner can express such crude sentiments unabashed, one can imagine what must be the psychology of those other Princes and Chiefs who are still steeped in the darkness of the middle ages, who believe that they are an integral part of the Supreme Divine Being, who claim that their own breath must be the only valid source of authority in their territory, and who fancy that their royal court is a handy ante-Chamber to Paradise, through which their Divine Presence could make its entrances and exits in either of the allied regions of heaven and earth ! The rebuffs, the insults and injuries which Princes receive at the hands of the British Government, one might expect, have disillusioned them from their aerial fancies and land them on the *terra-firma* on which they must render as well as exact accounts, and adjust their relations with their own subjects, as well as with their superiors, the paramount government.

But it is, I know, a vain hope for some time to come. The Princes seem yet inebriated with thoughts of their noble birth and ancient traditions. I was amused to read, in the speech of the Jamsaheb at a recent banquet given by the Kathiawad Princes to Lord Reading, interesting stories about the ancient origin of many of those present. They were all, it seems, either direct lineal descendants

sions of evil memory. Surely the meanest among British subjects may have in many cases a more enviable lot as compared with Indian Princes, when we take into consideration the dilemmas with which their path is beset, owing to their vested interests on the one hand, and the sneaking subtle coercion of the Political Department on the other. We can wickedly hope that those secret sufferings of the Indian Princes may reveal to at least some of them by the principle of आत्मसम्य, that is to say, realisation by parallelism, the miserable plight of their subjects under their own autocratic rule.

No doubt the Montford Report has distinctly advised the Indian Princes and Chiefs to put their house in order and warned them that they cannot hope eternally to escape from the advancing tide of democratic Swarajya. Also Governors and Viceroys occasionally throw out gentle hints about the introduction of political reform in Indian States. But they are generally lost in the effusions of the courtly compliments and plentiful praises bestowed by the representatives of the paramount power upon the Princes. Perhaps the occasions on which they both meet are unsuitable to any words of harsh and minatory advice. For the occasions are those periodical visits of Governors and Viceroys to favoured states at the invitation of the rulers and the very laws of hospitality on the one hand and of common courtesy on the other, impose peculiar conditions of forbearance on the part of the guest as well as the host. We do not wish that these laws of correct conduct should be violated. But our complaint is that the paramount government do not let the Indian Princes know their real mind on the question of representative and responsible government even by the legitimate use of other occasions and methods which are open to them for the purpose. The sweetness of Spring need not be

causelessly spoiled by the thunders of heaven. But there is a time fixed for the advent also of the rains, and woe betide humanity if the clouds refuse to do their duty of darkening the heavens and making a wholesome display of lightning as the result of accumulated heat at the end of the शीष्म season !

It was hoped that the establishment of the Chamber of Princes or Narendra Mandal would result in a suitable expression to the duties as well as the rights of Indian Princes. But while the Princes have not been able to use the new machinery to successfully assert their own rights as against the paramount government, the latter in their turn have failed to address a single word to the Princes in the matter of their obligations towards their subjects. The Chamber of Princes has proved nothing better than a gilded lounge or a political smoking room. It is a Chamber which is locked for years together, is then opened only for a brief while, and even then the discussion of fundamental or radical questions is given the entire go-bye. The Narendra Mandal is a good old classical name. But it signifies for the present nothing more than its anachronistic character. Its constitution is yet unsettled. Some of the biggest Indian Princes still consider it beneath their dignity to sit in the Chamber, and the remaining chairs are filled by Princes who are either the favourite nominees of Government or are elected by pocket-boroughs. The Princes who have boycotted the Chamber are, however, committing exactly the mistake which was committed by the Non-co-operation leaders in the Congress. On the other hand, those Princes who have sought admission into the Chamber are, with the exception of the Maharajah of Bikaner and the Maharajah of Gwalior, too unimportant to take up the responsibility of fundamental questions of the relations between the

from the eternal deities like the sun and the moon or divine incarnations like Shri Krishna or Shri Rama. Now, I do not mean to cynically cavil at the pride of ancestry displayed by the Jamsaheb. We are all proud, in our own way, of our birth and forefathers: but my amusement arises from the fact that the Kathiawad Princes, who represent in this respect probably all other Princes elsewhere, are happily ignorant that their subjects also have a divine origin. God, according to the Hindu doctrine, had to go out of his way to assume human form to be able to adequately realise himself for the purposes of this world of his own creation. Without the convenient medium of humanity it is impossible for even divinity to express itself in certain of its aspects. Shri Krishna from whom the Kathiawad Princes claimed their origin was the son of man, was born in prison, and had to be reared up to manhood under the cover of false personation. Himself a cowherd, he mixed with the unwashed children of other cowherds. He sat on the same blanket with them, sang the same songs, played the same sports, and shared with them not only his bread and butter but their joys and sorrows. But Shri Krishna did not forget himself or his companions and friends even when he became a king and ruled over a city in which there were houses built of gold. He made his whole harem to wash the dusty feet of a poverty-stricken companion of his youth, and took delight in their fight for a share in the handful of parched rice which was the only present he could offer. In the Yajnya ceremony in the palace of Pandavas, he collected the plates and washed them when the feast was over, and on the battle-field he groomed the horses of the human pupil to whom he revealed the supreme and the beautiful wisdom of the Gita. Throughout his career he is known more as the friend of



the right and just and the sworn enemy of the wicked. He too knew intrigue but he spared it only for those who could be defeated only by intrigue.

My advice, therefore, to the Kathiawad Princes is that if they take pride in their primeval ancestor Shri Krishna and would emulate his example, it can be more profitably done by imitating his virtues and his love of humanity. Otherwise the meanest of their subjects may taunt them with the bare truth that they too are chips from the same divine block.

"From yon blue heavens above us bent,  
The gardner and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent,  
Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,  
Too proud from whence I come."

So retorted the self-respectful peasant boy in Tennyson's Song to the wicked patrician coquette. And so can validly say the common subject of the Indian Princes to his political ruler.

The warrior Karna says to Ashwatthama .

देवायत कु० जन्म मदायत तु पाण ।

In these terse words, brevity and truth go gracefully hand in hand, and Indian Princes will remember that their States will be doomed if they do not betimes enter into the spirit of the coming democracy and shape their policy and programme accordingly.

I hope you have seen from all this that it is a vain hope for the Indian States' subjects to depend upon the British Government, and much less so, upon the Indian Princes to win their freedom and their rights of Swarajya. Their first and their last resort in this matter must be themselves. It is only by their own strenuous efforts and sacrifices that they can make an impression upon their rulers .

as well as the outside public. Their cause stands to the general outside public, and I may say even to the political workers in the Congress and other organisations, in the same relation as the cause of Swarajya in British territory stands to the political parties in the Parliament and outside Parliament in England. Vicarious effort and vicarious sacrifice really do not count. You know the wellknown Marathi saying "स्वतः मेल्याशिवाय स्वर्ग द्दिप्त नाही"—"You have to die if you wish to see Paradise with your own eyes." Sympathy from the observing world is needful indeed. But it is only a stimulant and cannot take the place of food. The wrestler in the fighting pit gets generous applause from an admiring crowd, and the umpires in the ring may be trusted to enforce the rules of the game and to see that no foul play takes place. But all the physical vigour and train and all the urge of ambition must come out of the wrestler himself. On the same analogy I say to the peoples in the Indian States that they must take the movement for their freedom in their own hands, and may then look to the political leaders in British India for sympathy and advice. I know it means suffering for them. But they should not expect to get freedom so cheap.

"They have too long dodged and beat about the bush by holding States' Conferences outside their State territory. They should hereafter hold no Conference except in their own territory, and even offer Satyagraha for this purpose if the rulers prohibit the Conference. A wise Chief or Prince will generally feel inclined to grant this permission; and if so, the State people must make it easy for him to give the permission by agreeing, if necessary, to eschew from their deliberations all criticism of the British Government, except such as may strictly bear on their own domestic problems, and criticism also of sister States. They must not put their ruler in an

awkward or indefensible position by the discussion of irrelevant matters and irresponsible orations. The general theory of the rights of a subject people and the departmental administration in their own State ought to be theme enough for any of the most advanced views they may have to urge. And their ruler cannot possibly make a more reasonable offer to them than to offer himself and his State as a whole a target for their broad-side. They should remember that the Political Agent always holds their Prince in a nutcracker. With an unreasonable Chief, however, there need be no compromise. The fundamental political rights of humanity must be asserted against him and to defy his power and authority for this limited and legitimate purpose of the freedom of speech and association, would be not only the fittest answer to a Sultani *firman* from him, but perhaps also the best ultimate curative for his undisciplined temper. A more complicated question apparently would be the laying the venue of an All-India States' Conference in the territory of a State itself. But it is really not so difficult of solution.

And if the States' subjects make their mind to do all this, sympathy and assistance will flow to them from all quarters in unstinted measure. I am aware that they make it a grievance that the National Congress takes no interest in their affairs. I think the grievance is legitimate within certain limits. For, in my opinion, while the Congress is right in excluding from its jurisdiction the discussion of the affairs of internal administration of Indian States, it is wrong in its general attitude of indifference towards States' questions even in their broad and impersonal aspects. I am aware that the Indian States are allowed to be represented in the Congress session and the Congress government through adjacent British districts to whom they may be allotted; and that the States' constituencies

'All-Wise Providence. During the last four years he has done more for this cause than any other man of the present or any previous generation during a similar period. The great momentum of his *Tapasya* and patriotism helped this cause to yield wonderfully increasing returns and though the problem is not yet completely solved, it is, I should say, fairly on its way to solution.

To be fair to the previous generation of workers in the the cause, however, we must say that the seed had no doubt been well and truly sown by them. It was an uphill task for them even to preach the correct theory of this great Socio-Religious problem; but education, communications, and the spirit of Nationalism began to assert themselves as effective correctives to our prejudices, and the uplift of the untouchables came to be recognised as one of the cardinal principles and also items of the practical programme of Social Reform during the last thirty years.

A secular foreign government was also a help in its own way in the cause; and though Government, be it said to their credit, did not actively interfere with the religious customs and usages of the Indian people, their own example and even the expression of their preferences, could not fail to have their effect upon the situation,

And last but not least, we must thank our friends the Mahomedans for having given an unconscious push to this cause. Their zeal for the promulgation of their faith is something which must put the lethargic and the narrow-minded Hindu community to shame; and I cannot conceal from myself the fact that the imminent danger of the conversion of the untouchable classes had a share in bringing those classes nearer to the bosom of the caste Hindus. The Muslims, on the other hand, should remember that the movement of the uplift of the untouchables was even otherwise

bound to advance as a mere matter of the rousing consciousness of the national mind of the Hindus. There are so many other matters of Social Reform, which the Hindus have taken up in hand during the last half a century, and which have nothing, in the remotest degree, to do with their supposed rivalry or animus towards the Muslims. In my own memory female education *e. g.* was a battle-ground between the orthodox and the Social Reformer, and the Hindus certainly do not educate their women to spite the Muslims. For, education of women, they say, has the effect of retarding the growth of population! The Hindu propaganda of Temperance is quite irrespective of any religious considerations, and Temperance Reform has often become the common meeting ground of the Hindu and the Muslim Reformer. The abolition of unproductive mendicancy, and the organisation of Hindu religious charity on an economic basis does not even distantly advert the dangers of Muslim propagandism; and the same can be said of a number of other items of the Social Reform Programme. I have dealt with this sub-topic at this length, only because there is a tendency in certain quarters to ascribe the whole of this uplift-movement to our jealousy of the Muslim.

In my opinion, it is profitless to inquire how untouchability must have originally arisen and under what conditions it could have so flourished. Such an inquiry should be reserved for the pains-taking researches of those learned men who take delight in delving into the musty regions of antiquity. As for us, practical men, who have to act in the living present, it should suffice, if we could lift up two human comrades or brethren from the mire of undeserved degradation where only one was being done before. If, as Arthur Young says, the man, who makes two blades of grass grow where one was al-

ready growing can 'be called a benefactor of mankind, with how much more propriety would the appellation apply to those who seek the above-mentioned human quest ?

In the Bombay papers I have recently seen an amusing controversy about the commandments of the Smritis in the matter of untouchability. The controversy, it should be remembered, arose out of a meeting of certain Bombay citizens of the orthodox persuasion held to condemn Mahatma Gandhi. But the controversialists should have remembered that our Smritis are for the greater part no deductive ordinances, based on the inner consciousness of a supernatural Being, but are a record and digest of the customs and usages inductively inferred and practised as the best for the time being. The Smritis in fact stand in the same relation to social customs and usages as the rules of grammar stand to language. It is the living language that ultimately determines the grammar, and not *vice versa*, though this may look somewhat paradoxical. The rules of grammar govern the language, only so far as exceptions to them have not accumulated enough to necessitate the revision of the rules; and social usages and customs have the same elasticity and progressiveness as language. A Smriti is like a monarchical dynasty which reigns for a limited period and is supplanted in course of time by another dynasty. The seeming epochs of social history are really made by revolutions securely accomplished.

To assume that the authors of our Smritis wickedly and deliberately put a ban, which was not there before, against particular classes of people is mere blasphemy. The Smriti-writers were as a rule learned men, and they would know better than to arrogate to themselves the authority unwarranted by usage in this respect, the authority to condemn to degradation whole classes of humanity.

On the contrary, they were prepared always to recognise accommodating exceptions even to existing usages which they could not have helped. We see them alive, for instance, to the necessity of reconverting unfortunate victims of conversion to other faiths, and they extended the margin for repentance and reclamation even to persons who might have given up the Hindu religion in a wayward fashion. According to the Deval Smriti not one convert to other religions need remain outside the Hindu fold, if he has a mind to come back to it. Nor is there any evidence that the reclaimed converts were regarded as untouchables. Much better consideration must they, therefore, be presumed to have intended for those people who never abandoned the Hindu religion. There can be no doubt, however, that whatever the disabilities recognised by the authors of the Smritis against the untouchable classes, they were improved upon for the worse, in actual practice, by unthinking people. The Hindu society, taken all in all, behaved very much like a Raja or Zamindar who may be too opulent even to keep an accurate inventory of his lands and other property and reckless, therefore, of his losses and deprivations. It is only an oppressive consciousness of plenty and variety that stimulates fastidious discrimination and leads to criminal neglect; and it is only when a millionaire is face to face with want and woe that he realises the imprudence and injustice of his past actions. Against this back-ground shine the merits of the depressed classes themselves who have all the time faithfully stuck to the Hindu religion, in the midst of humiliation and degradation, though they could see that they might perhaps better their lot, if only they were prepared to give up their religion. The contrast clearly shows who it is that really cared more for the Hindu religion, whether the caste Hindus who enjoyed the benefits of a life on the higher plane or

remembered that a more positive, pointed and specific action on the part of the caste Hindus is required, if the real Rubicon of untouchability must be crossed. The demonstrative character of the specific act of reform must be in proportion to the mass of the existing prejudice. For instance, one inter-communal dinner with selected guests would go a greater way than a hundred propagandistic lectures dressed up in platitudes. If one selected *chamar* is taken by the hand by an orthodox Hindu into the public temple by common consent of the caste Hindus to have Deva-darshana, the communal bitterness will disappear immediately.

Some people seek refuge against removal of untouchability behind the plausible excuse, that they would agree to remove untouchability as such, if the pollution of clean water wells and sacred temples by uncleanly Panchamas were not to be the result. But admission to wells and temples will really be found not to be strictly governed by the canons of cleanliness. The touchstone can easily be applied by isolating the phenomenon from all complications. It is quite easy to prove the hypocrisy underlying the argument of cleanliness, by offering test conditions which secure detection of the real motive of the orthodox bigot. On the other hand, removal of untouchability is not inconsistent with an ever more and more rigorous application of the laws of cleanliness, provided the high caste Hindus also are subjected to the same discipline without discrimination.

Personally I have always held the opinion that a place of worship should be really treated as sacred, not only in spiritual but also in the physical sense, that is to say, it should be kept as free from human touch as possible. A small inner area can always be so preserved in every Hindu temple that in this charmed circle of sanctity no



coming into direct conflict with the orthodox in the society. Further, they must throw in the weight of their own practice by adopting a higher standard of cleanliness, or at least expressing a conscious preference for it. I am not unaware that much of the dirty work which the depressed classes do is in a way imposed upon them by the necessities of life. But they should try to realise that this imposition would not be successful, if they themselves were not a kind of willing party to it.

In these days of civilised Government no Pancham can really be coerced to undertake the profession of the scavenger or to eat the carrion. Also they may realise that they can with just a little spirit of enterprise try the other avenues of labour for earning a livelihood. It is because they willingly undertake the sanitary services, as if that was a privilege or preserve for themselves, that the upper classes can do the double injustice of exacting these services from the depressed classes and then treating them as untouchables for the very reason of their habitually rendering those services. Some human agency may be necessary for the sanitary services, so long as mere dead physical appliances do not step in to take its place. But I have always wondered that in the scheme of the division of labour in this department of human affairs, the profession of scavenging should be a monopoly ! In England and Japan the former does not regard himself as degraded if he works as the sanitary servant of his house-hold. As an agriculturist he is jealous of the manure and sullage which he can command. The Hospital Nurse and the medical attendant can render sanitary service without being included in the depressed classes, simply because they do it only incidentally and not as a substantive profession. And again, is not the mother in every caste Hindu household technically a scavenger ? But her motive is the

## The Ordinance and the Regulations

Lecture delivered by Mr. N. C. Kelkar at the St. Stephen's College on Wednesday, the 18th February, 1925.

Gentlemen,

I am thankful to you for the honour you have done me by inviting me to deliver a lecture under the auspices of the Criterion Club. I gladly avail myself of the opportunity to exchange views with you on a subject which, as the Chairman has put it, is very thorny but which, at the same time, is a question of very great constitutional importance. And the only return I ask of you is a judgment at your hands, after you have applied the criterion which gives the name to your Club, to the arguments I will place before you on the subject. You all know that, till after the Simla session was over, there was absolute quiet and peace in all parts of India. If there was any unrest or trouble it was the one caused by abnormal floods in the country. The political sky was quite serene. One night, however, quite unexpectedly the sky became overcast with clouds, there was deep and loud thundering and next morning we all woke up to hear that an Act, called the Bengal Ordinance Act, was enacted by the Viceroy on his own responsibility, and consequently a number of people were arrested in Calcutta and in other places in Bengal.

For a time the public judgment was stunned, as it could not make out the rights or wrongs of the situation. In fact, they took it for granted for some time that Government had very good reasons for taking the step they took, and they were anxiously watching the development of the process of law as it was put into operation. For half a week or a week they watched the situation, but it was

powers, as an exceptional measure, without sharing the responsibility with the legislature. Also it differs from an Act in this respect that it has natural termination at the end of six months. Mr. Doraiswami Ayengar called upon Government to introduce legislation in the Assembly on the lines of the Ordinance, as the Ordinance was meant to remain in force for five years and had otherwise to be abnormally submitted to the sanction of the King-Emperor himself. If the Bill introduced in the Bengal Council were carried, then there would be no need of legislation in the Assembly, but as we all know that the Bill was not allowed even to be introduced. Mr. Doraiswami's invitation to Government, therefore, to introduce a legislation in the Assembly was perfectly fair. But it was not only constructive, it was also meant to be a challenge to Government. It meant as much as to say to Government—"Here we are; you passed the Ordinance behind our back after the last session of the Assembly was over: you may now introduce the legislation here if you dare."

Now, I will say one word about the character of the debate which was directed upon the Resolution. Of course it was not a battle in which, if Government were defeated, the administration would be revolutionised. No one expected a revolution as the result of the Resolution being carried. It was also not a gladiator's fight, as in the days of old, in the Roman arena, where the spectators in the galleries might turn their thumb down to express their fatal fascination to see a fight to the finish. But it was only a kind of an old-world, chivalrous duel in which the combatants are allowed to fight only till the blood is drawn and the point of honour is decided thereby. I claim that, in this debate, blood was drawn by the non-official sword and the point of honour was decided in favour of public opinion. Not that I am not aware that a Re-

of these admissions but he did not advert to the fact that both Das and Nehru themselves declared that they were against all revolutionary conspiracy and that they were prepared to set their faces against anarchy. They had also suggested definite remedies. Now, if the statements of Das and Nehru are to be accepted and used for one purpose why should they not be used and accepted for another purpose also ? It is a doctrine of law that, if a testimony is to be used, the whole of it must be used, and that if one part may be used for one purpose, another part of it must be allowed to be used for another purpose also. But the Viceroy and Lord Lytton betrayed their perversity of mind, which would choose only the poison and reject the antidote, though both were to be found in the same place.

Then there is the testimony of Mr. N. N. Sen Gupta. Here was apparently a veritable God in the machine which Lord Lytton thought he discovered. You all know that Mr. Sen Gupta made a certain confession in private to Lord Lytton. But what was the confession ? It only amounted to this that, though at one time really guilty of an anarchical crime and a revolutionary conspiracy, he was acquitted by three High Court Judges. But Sen Gupta's is not the only case or the first case in which a thing like that has happened. Even in our usual experience of judicial courts and trials we come across a number of cases in which guilty persons are acquitted for a number of reasons. And do you wish to know the reason in this particular case ? It was not the lack of judicial sense on the part of the Judges, for they included an eminent Judge like Sir Lawrence Jenkins; but it was the fault of the Police themselves who attempted to use evidence for convicting Sen Gupta and his associates in what is known as the Musalman Para Bomb case. The

*Calcutta Weekly Notes* has given the facts. It says "A revolver alleged to have been found in the possession of the accused, when he was handed over by the constables to a European Police Officer, was found by him to be too bright, spotless and without any stain of blood. The police testimony was that the accused was carrying the revolver in his hand. The only explanation that would suggest to oneself was that he very likely carried it in his coat-pocket, but the police did not produce the coat in the Police Court. The natural inference was that the pockets of the coat were not capacious enough to hold the revolver and that the story of the revolver had been introduced to improve the case." It was evidence of this kind that wrecked the whole case. The police were to blame for it and not the Judges, if it were a true case. It would also be remembered that in this case there was no allegation of witnesses not coming forward to give any evidence.

As I have said, the case of Sen Gupta's acquittal and his 'change of faith' is not without parallel. The change of faith is a thing which happens in many a case in the case of young emotional men. I can cite the instance of the famous Savarkar Brothers who, I can say, have now changed their faith, that is to say, they now come to this conclusion that India cannot win Swarajya merely by such violent acts as at one time loomed large before their eyes. Only recently, the Bombay University restored the Degree of M. A. to one Mr. Kharay who, after passing his M. A., got involved in the Nasik conspiracy case and was sent to jail for several years. Mr. Kharay has now, I believe, changed his faith in a similar manner. But that is neither here nor there. For neither the Savarkar Brothers nor Mr. Kharay, to my knowledge, approve of the Bengal Or-

I will give one more instance of a change of faith, that of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy. He was an Irish rebel

and was sentenced to death, but he managed to escape to Australia and, as fate would have it, ultimately became a Knight and Prime Minister of a Colony in the Empire. He too had changed his faith, but I do not know that he was an advocate of 'conviction and sentence without trial.' The real point is not that really guilty persons are sometimes acquitted and change their faith, but whether, even on the supposition that some guilty persons are acquitted, it is right to convict people without a trial and without evidence. I will give you still one more instance. It is that of the great-grand-father of Lord Minto. Recently I read in Lord Minto's biography that the great-grand-father of the Indian Viceroy had the misfortune to be involved in a case of revolutionary murder and was sentenced to be hanged. He too could make his escape, and as the irony of fate would have it, he was eventually pardoned, was called to the Bar, was elevated to the Bench, and ultimately actually occupied the very Bench from which he had been convicted and sentenced to death. But are we to assume that this fortunate Judge would be in favour of conviction and sentence without a proper trial simply because he was acquitted though guilty and could not be brought to book? And does Sen Gupta himself approve of the Ordinance? No! In his letter to the *Statesman* he says, "I do not understand whether the Ordinance and the Bill that was to replace it are the best measures that the science of administration can suggest for dealing with the dragon of terrorism." If you read between these lines, you will find a silent condemnation of the method adopted by Government corresponding to a condemnation of the methods of the anarchists. My conclusion, on this point, therefore, is that the whole point of quoting Sen Gupta's testimony is lost; and though Lord Lytton thought that he had drawn a first class ticket in this desperate lottery he drew only a blank.

Meanwhile there is plenty of courts-martial, *letters de cachet* and the other paraphernalia of law and order." "A radical friend of mine used to ask me whether I would repeal the Regulations of 1818. Of course, I shall tell him. No! But you know the ground too well in Pall-Mall, Westminster, and the City of London, for me to need to draw a picture of the forces that will wax active in the various directions." Again in one place he says "And now, by the way, that we have got down the rusty sword of 1818, I wish you would deport these two officials and Y. What do you say? I should defend that operation with real verve"! The meaning of this suggestion is obvious. On May 27th he writes, "The point here taken is the failure to tell the deportee what he is arrested for, to detain him without letting him know exactly why, to give him no chance of clearing himself. In spite of your Indian environment you can easily imagine how galling is such a line as that to our honest English minds with their good traditions of legal right; and you will perceive the difficulty of sustaining a position so uncongenial to popular habits of mind either Whig or Tory."

Again on November 9th, he writes as follows: "You state your case with remarkable force, I admit, but then I comfort myself in my disquiet at differing from you by the reflection that perhaps the Spanish Viceroys in the Netherlands, the Austrian Viceroy in Venice, the Bourbons in the two Sicilies and a Governor or two in the old American Colonies used reasoning not wholly dissimilar and not much less forcible." Again on January 27th he says: "You say, 'We admit that being locked up they (detenus) can have had no share in these new abominations; but their continued detention will frighten evil-doers generally.' That is the Russian argument, 'by packing off train-loads of suspects to Siberia we will terrify the

anarchists out of their wits and all will come out right.' That policy did not work out brilliantly in Russia, and did not save the lives of the Trepoffs, nor did it save Russia from a Duma, the very thing that the Trepoffs and the rest of the 'offs' deprecated and detested."

More conclusive to my mind is the testimony of Mr. F. E. Smith, the present Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, who though a Conservative, had joined the hunt against Lord Morley on the ground of deportations as he was a lawyer and possessed a judicial mind. For Mr. F. E. Smith in one of his interpellations to Lord Morley put to him the following pointed questions:

(1) Have these men been given any opportunity to explain the charges brought against them ?

(2) Have they ever had explained to them the grounds on which it has been thought necessary for the Government of India to interfere with their freedom ?

(3) What is the objection to informing persons who have been deported as to the evidence and grounds upon which they have been deported ?

(4) Has the evidence against the persons concerned been made known to them so as to give them an opportunity of explaining or dealing with it ?

I attach special importance to these categorical questions then put by the present State Secretary on the subject, because those questions contain the very best arguments that can be adduced against the practice of illegal deportation.

The last ground of justification is one not advanced by Lord Reading himself but advanced on his behalf by some of his friends and supporters. The argument is in effect this. Lord Reading is the Ex-Lord Chief Justice of England, he has both a legal and judicial training of mind. We must, therefore, presume that he must have sifted the



evidence for himself and thereupon consented to this Ordinance as a matter of necessity. Let me tell you, however, that that is not my belief. Lord Reading was an Ex-Chief Justice no doubt, but he was also a number of other things in his time, and even as regards his judicial training of mind I will remind you of the saying of a worldly-wise man who has said that the aura of honesty on the face of one thief may enable him to secure by seal the horses from the stable, though another may not even look over the hedge. That one pithy observation is quite enough in my opinion to answer the arguments based on the ground of Lord Reading's judicial mind. I am absolutely convinced that Lord Reading is one of those persons who love arbitrary power and unbridled authority. At one time he held a wig on his head, but now a coronet has been superadded to it. And have you not seen the way in which he figures in the Durbar and makes his speeches? His royal robes are quite in harmony with his princely pages, and both together are in harmony with his love of autocratic power. It is said that sportsmen, who possess an armoury of various weapons, often like just for fancy, to use the most obsolete weapons in the armoury. So it has been with the Viceroys of India. A Viceroy of India brings to my mind the character of the Duke in Shakespeare who says:

'We have strict statutes and most biting laws,  
Which for these twenty years we have let sleep,  
Like an overgrown lion in a cave,  
That goes not out to prey.'

But as against Lord Reading I can quote another eminent Judge, I mean, Sir William Jones, who has condemned the use of arbitrary power in terms, in which curiously enough he carried forward the very metaphor which I have cited from Shakespeare. Says Sir William

Jones in the charge to the jury in one of the famous trials in the Calcutta High Court. "The progress of arbitrary power is commonly slow at first and imperceptible to all but the vigilant, like the creeping of a tiger at night in a brake, and it behoves us by all decent and legal means to guard posterity against the ultimate spring from which nothing less than the doubtful horrors of civil war might be able to protect them."

I will now turn for a moment to the Regulation under which the prisoners were first arrested in Bengal and subsequently transferred to the operation of the Bengal Ordinance. Regulations of this sort are three in number—one for each of the Provinces of Madras, Bengal and Bombay. Now if you look to the preambles of these Regulations you will find that, though measures of arbitrary legislation, they were perhaps suitable to the times in which they were enacted. The preambles clearly show that they were meant as protectionary measures against Indian Princes, Chiefs, Potentates or other people of importance, secretly plotting with the enemies of the British Government outside the frontier. The Regulations could not be objected to, so long as the British rule in India was being organised, consolidated, extended and established. But they are without their excuse in these piping times of peace, though I admit here and there even in these days there may be a sign or an actual case of revolutionary plotting and conspiracy. In the days of the Mutiny the Regulations were of course very freely used, and that again was an occasion when nobody could object to the use of the Regulations, for exceptional time demanded exceptional measures. If people were executed and blown from the mouths of canons on mere suspicion, one can easily understand how hundreds of people might have been subjected to the operation of these Regulations and

detained, arrested and imprisoned without trial. But then began cases in which the Regulations were used without necessity and against wrong persons. The case called the Wahabi case of 1870 is very well-known. In this case two Mahomedan merchants of Calcutta were arrested and imprisoned for a very long time under these Regulations. They were old men both of them, past 60 or 65 years, and were insignificant merchants and the irony of fate is that out of these two who were suspected of a Wahabi conspiracy one, at any rate, was not a Wahabi but a mere Soonee. Readers in Law Libraries might have come across the proceedings of this well-known case in which an application for *habeas corpus* was made and argued on behalf of Amir Khan and Hashmadad Khan by the well-known Bombay Barrister Mr. Anstey before Justice Norman of the Calcutta High Court. The application was rejected, but with very evil results. For we all know that Justice Norman was murdered later on the steps of the Calcutta High Court by a Wahabi, and Lord Mayo himself who was responsible for the warrant under which these two men were arrested, was murdered by a Mahomedan fanatic in the Andaman Islands.

Then come the cases of the two Natu brothers who, as you are perhaps aware, were deported under the Bombay Regulation 25 of 1827. It was at first believed by the Police that the Natu brothers had a hand in the murder of Mr. Rand and Lt. Ayerst on the night of the Diamond Jubilee celebration in June 1897 on the Ganeshkhind Road. But within a short period the real culprits were found, tried, convicted and hanged; and it was made quite clear in the judicial proceedings not only that the whole conspiracy was discovered and dealt with but that the Natus had absolutely no hand in the murders and yet their detention was continued for a very long time. Government could

not, for the life of them, find out any excuse for imprisoning the younger brother. He had done really nothing, nor was he capable of doing any political mischief. Horse-riding was his only hobby and his only crime was that he taught horse-riding to young boys in Poona. And the only charge that could be discovered against the elder brother, and which was admitted to be the only charge by the State Secretary, Lord George Hamilton in Parliament, was that he was responsible for a European nurse being censured and dismissed from service by the plague authorities in the Poona plague operations. Then in 1905 or 1907 comes the case of Lala Lajpat Rai. Now, was he guilty of any murder or was there any murder at all in the case? No. He was deported simply because he was a keen political agitator. But surely the Regulation is not meant for dealing with political agitators of this kind. And then we come to the case of the Bengal detenus, Babus Aswini Kumar Dutt and Krishna Kumar Mitter, who were saintly men and comparatively only moderate politicians. And lastly comes the case of Babu Subash Chandra Bose. In this case also it has not been alleged that he is guilty of any complicity with any murderers or revolutionaries. His good character has been testified to by Europeans as well as Indians. Now all these cases conclusively prove that the Regulation has been abused.

The Hon'ble the Home Member, Sir Alexander Mudiman, said the other day in the Assembly that he was himself against measures like the Regulations, and further that he would not detain any prisoner under these Regulations a single day longer than was absolutely necessary. Now, in the first place, the necessity for deportations in the present cases has not been established by evidence. The Viceroy has simply begged the question

along with Lord Lytton in saying that revolutionary crime exists on such a scale, or that insurmountable difficulties exist about bringing real culprits to trial. And as for the unjustifiable prolongation of the detention period I can say that Government continue the detention of prisoners under the Regulations simply as long as they desire, apart from any necessity. To give one instance, I will again give that of the Bengal detenus themselves. After the deportees were in jail for about nine months, the British Cabinet unanimously came to the conclusion that they should now be released, and Lord Morley was anxiously pleading with the Viceroy to release them, especially because they were on the eve of inauguration of further political reforms. But Lord Minto set his face against the immediate release of the detenus, and I will quote to you an extract from Lord Minto's letter to Lord Morley in which you will clearly find that the detention of the Bengal detenus was proposed to be prolonged simply because Government wanted their Moderate friends to win the impending Council elections. He says: "One of the great hopes of our reform scheme was to rally the Moderates. Surely it would not be wise to turn loose those firebrands into the political arena just at the very moment when we are hoping that the reasonable and suitable characters in the Indian society will come forward and range themselves on our side and on the side of constitutional progress. It seems to me that if we were to do this we shall be creating the self-contradictory situation in that, having withdrawn the deportees from political life for nine months or so while nothing was going on, we shall be liberating them at the very moment when the whole country will be in the turmoil of a general election and when we are trying to work out an entirely novel federal machinery."

You will thus see that these Regulations are used without necessity, are used against wrong persons and that their use is continued without reason.

Before I conclude I will just answer one argument viz. that those who plead for the repeal of the Regulations in effect plead for criminals. But my answer to that is that the argument begs the whole question. For the question really is not what should be done with the criminals but in the first place who the criminals are. It is easy in the Assembly for the Home Member or his friends, to say that so and so is a revolutionary criminal. But they can afford to say so only because they enjoy the protection of the privilege of the House. I wish some of these people will call men like Lala Lajpat Rai and Subash Chandra Bose criminals and revolutionary conspirators outside the Assembly. For I am quite sure that, with the least touch of legal proceedings against them, they will have to recant what they say and to make apology and make amends to those whom they cry down, just as the *Globe* and the *London Times* did to the late Lokamanya Tilak when he was similarly attacked and defamed by them. Subash Chandra Bose has actually filed two suits in the High Court against the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*, and we shall soon see how the charges of revolutionary conspiracy, etc. are substantiated by the defendants against him. The Home Member can say these things with impunity and blacken the character of any man in the safe retreat of the Councils. It is because of this I say that the greatest and the real terrorist throughout India is not the friend of the Bolshevik or the bomb-maker, but the Home Member himself. For, by his irresponsible use of a word of mouth or one signature, he can let loose upon the innocent people of India all the forces of physical oppression and persecution. He can open the flood-gates.

of legalised cruelty and can put in motion all the police and all the military strength of the Government against even innocent and unarmed people. It is the Home Member and the Viceroy also who are, therefore, the real terrorists, and it is, therefore, they, rather than the supposed anarchists of Bengal, that deserve public condemnation. I will only conclude with making a quotation from Barrister Anstey's speech as part of my own argument in this matter. In pleading the Wahabi case he said: "This act of power and this act of tyranny (meaning the use of Regulations) is a nullity. The Regulation is no law, and every man in the realm is bound to disobey it. My Lord, what is this after all, but a most unwarranted act of power? Poor James II never did anything so bad as this. He claimed a power of dispensing with law, he exercised a power which lawfully belonged to him. He had not the suspending power but he had the dispensing power. He never claimed the power to make regulations without the assent of Parliament, or to punish men for high treason on mere suspicion without a trial. He never did that. His guilt was great, but not so great as that of the Governor-General-in-Council who passes a regulation, and, as in the present case, pretends to act under the sanction of that authority."

Gentleman, I have finished and, as I said in the beginning, I shall feel compensated for my labour, if I get a verdict at your hands on the arguments advanced by me, by your applying the criterion of your judgment as you are apparently fond of that good word "**CRITERION.**"

(Feb 1895)

## Reply to Sir Charles Innes

### *Grievances of the Postal Staff*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar in his speech in the Legislative Assembly, observed :—

“ The case is a simple one whoever takes it up. The case is, I think, briefly put in one or two sentences. The grievances of the postal people existed to a large extent before 1920, before the first Inquiry Committee was appointed. Then a committee was appointed after some agitation, and the grievances were partly redressed. But then they were not wholly redressed. In the meanwhile another committee was granted to the Telegraphic Department people, and now our case on behalf of the postal employees is that, a similar committee should be given to them in order that a full inquiry may be made into their grievances as well. That is the simple case. If you look at the different amendments on the paper, you will find there is not much difference of opinion among those who have proposed the amendments on the real principle of the Resolution, that is to say, an inquiry by some sort of a committee. But before I touch on that subject,—and even when I go into it I will not go, I promise the House, into tedious details of Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 or applying the calculus of pay and so on, because these details are likely to be regarded as tedious. But the main proposition stands correct and sound, that the employees have grievances and they must not be denied a proper inquiry into the matter.

But before proceeding to that, I would like to say one word about an under-current of thought that seems to run in this House, and which was given expression to the other day during the discussion of the railway grievances by my friend Sir Charles Innes. I am sorry he is not in the House to-day. I am referring to those remarks, but of course I



shall not be taken directly to criticise that speech, but to be criticising only the general idea that underlies the speech. He seemed to be out to give this Assembly a kind of minatory warning that it is a dangerous game to go into the details of administration of any department. And I refer to that matter here because in this inquiry also some people's minds may be swayed by the idea that, in discussing small matters like this, the small pays, pensions and local allowances of postal men, we are really going into details of administration which really we ought not to do. But I want at once to state the reason why to do this. The State is a great employer, but we also want the State to be a good employer. It is our business in this Assembly, representing as we do a number of electors, among whom also there are postmasters and others who are voters, to look into the administration of the postal and similar departments, at least from the point of view of policy, and in generally discussing policy, of course we cannot very well avoid small details at times.

But that does not mean that we come here ready with briefs on individual grievances of grievance-mongers. I would certainly deprecate any attitude assumed by any Member of this House that he was an advocate in this Assembly for any personal individual grievance. But an individual grievance is sometimes an unmistakable symptom of a wrong policy. I felt really very sad when in his speech the other day Sir Charles Innes went the length of even suggesting that this inquiry into administrative details on the part of the Assembly Members might lead to corruption. He said, quoting somebody's words, that politics might corrupt railways and railways might corrupt politics. Possibly some other Member on behalf of Government—I do not mean to say that the present Director-General will say that—I know him

by repute, though not personally, too well to suppose that he is of that frame of mind; and if I seem in this matter to speak better of one than of another it may be realised that, after all, servants of the Crown are not rival beauties, so that the praise of one means disparagement of the other. I refer to that matter in particular because it is a question of principle and we must come to close grips with that principle some time or other, and, therefore, I take this opportunity to go into the matter, because I really took it to heart the other day during the discussion of railway grievances that, Sir Charles Innes should have thought fit to remind us of a possible danger that inquiry into the details of the administration might lead to corruption. Possibly his mind was harking back to the early traditions of his own British Parliament. We all know that the first Prime Minister of the Parliament was well-known for his maxim that every man has his price; and by realising the importance of that maxim he was the first Prime Minister of England and ruled it. All students of history know that. But I want to go a little step further. The other day when I was just looking over the duties of a whip—because I am myself a whip—I came across this precious piece of information relating to the duties of a whip and for the sake of enlightening the House I shall read that extract:

“ The post of the whip was originally created for the corruption of members in a criminal sense of the word. Ministers bought their majority by payment of actual cash; they had a window in the House itself where members came to be paid for their votes after the division. The Political Secretary to the Treasury was called the Patronage Secretary, because in his capacity of agent of corruption he disposed of the Patronage. Places in the Custom

House, Post Office and Excise were the small electoral change which the Government distributed. The Patronage Secretary had to supply the Government with a majority as cheaply as possible. "

I do not know whether Sir Charles Innes had that function of the whip in his mind when he solemnly warned us against corruption. Corruption means one of two things. It means demoralization or actual pecuniary corruption. I have already spoken of the second thing. Even as for demoralization, I would say that we are not such intellectual fools as to go astray by the sheer necessity of having to look into the details of administration of any department. Now, we put several questions on behalf of these employees. Why do we do so ? Are our questions personal in any subjective or objective sense ? Certainly they are impersonal. In most cases, I think from my own experience, I can say that we cannot even imagine the physiognomy or colour or voice of the man concerned for whom we are putting a question. I mean they are so apart from us. The questions, therefore, I say, are impersonal both subjectively and objectively. That applies similarly to any resolutions that we propose for them. (*Mr. K. Ahmad*—"What about the Tatas ? The rumour is that you have got two lakhs of rupees from them.") My reply to that is easy; I shall tell my Honourable friend the reply which sometimes I give to the accusation against the Swarajya Party in the mofussil when they are asked as to how much the Swarajya Party got from the Tatas. I say the share of those who hold the patronage must have been much greater than what the Swarajya Party is alleged to have got; when they ask as to the amount of money that has changed hands, I say, go and ask Government. However, I do not want to pursue that matter further (laughter). I only touch that subject here because I really want to

fight against that notion which seems to have taken possession of the mind of some Members on the other side that, we concern ourselves in any personal sense or manner with the grievances that we place before this House. The Postal Department is such a department that we really love it. I may at once say that it is the one department in the administration of the Indian Government which we really love. It is the most innocent department and the most useful department in the whole gamut of administrative departments under the Government of India, and, therefore, we love it. It is a matter of every day use to us. Its usefulness radiates equally into the rural and urban areas, and there is hardly any other department which really does so much work, and, therefore, we stand up here not merely to represent its cause and to testify to the practical beneficence and the practical usefulness of the postal service. We stand up here to support its cause as enthusiastic advocates of its proper claims, whatever they may be. But when I speak of proper claims, I am not prepared to go at once into the duties of the men, not to discuss the emoluments of a clerk here or a clerk there, or the pay of a postmaster in the Bombay city or Poona city, and so on. All that I am prepared to leave to a proper tribunal of inquiry. As I have said, our heart goes out to these postal people, and in that respect I have on my side the testimony of other eminent people also. I will just read to the House what one of the greatest poets of England, Rudyard Kipling, himself thinks about a menial—of course he means the postal menial—who runs the Royal Mail:

“Is the torrent in spate ? He must ford  
it or swim.

Has the rain wrecked the road ? He must  
climb by the cliff,

The Service admits not a but, nor an if,  
While the breath's in his mouth he must  
bear without fail,  
In the name of the Emperor—the Over-  
land Mail."

Now, I ask the House, if we stand up here in the name of this mail-bearer, the bearer of the Royal Mail, the Emperor's Mail, to put forward his claims for better consideration, are the Government going to tell us in return that our attention, our devotional attention, to administration is going to corrupt this Assembly ?

Then I will read another extract from the Director-General's own book upon the post office. Therein he has given a picture of what sort of man the postmaster is, and how many duties he has really got to perform.

"From being merely an agency for the conveyance and distribution of letters and light articles, the post office has gradually undertaken an enormous amount of what may be called non-postal work. It deals with vast numbers of money-orders, collects the price of goods for tradesmen, pays pensions, sells quinine, deals in government loans and is the poor man's bank. It is to be hoped that no new line of business is going to be taken up in the near future, such as the sale of railway tickets which was once seriously proposed, or else the principal duty of the department may be forgotten in the turmoil of the side-shows."

That is a quotation from the Director-General's own book. It will show to this House what view he takes of the busy character, of the varied character, of the work which a postmaster has got to do.

Then I will refer to one point, and that is about the supposed rivalry between a postman and a telegraphist.

I am not prepared to put that point in the manner that my Honourable friend Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal put it. I do contend that we do not advocate the cause of the postman in a spirit of bitter rivalry. I think it is not a spirit of bitter rivalry, but a spirit of hopeful rivalry. The hope lies in the fact that because the telegraphist has got redress of his grievances, therefore, the postman also may hope to have his grievances redressed similarly. That is the only point of view from which we look at the grievances of the postman. And then naturally the question comes as to who is the more efficient or who is the more necessary agent of this kind of work. And in that respect I must say, in my own judgment, the telegraphist, though of course he enjoys his share of technical skill he does not certainly require that capacious mind and that steady devotion to duty that a post-menial or a postmaster does. I will just read out a few lines in which the duties of a postmaster are described again :

"If the telegraphist is a highly technical good man, it is very correct to say that a postal official,—at least that man who is in charge of a post office at busy towns not less than a Taluka or Tahsil town—is a highly practical and smart business-man. On one side he is accepting money orders, insured articles worth thousands of rupees, and on the other, he is giving instructions to his postmen or other menials about delivery or classing mails, or to the half a dozen men standing at the counter, each with a different kind of transaction—one customer asking for packets of commercial envelopes and offering five rupee notes for the transaction; another asking to send his money order or his parcel free of customs charges to a city in China; a third asking to transfer his Savings Bank's account along with

his cash certificates and Government securities to Aberdeen; a fourth man offering a telegram for despatch to the Archipelago; a fifth man inquiring why his letter from Brazil has taken so many days to reach him, and so on. Is not the knowledge of this official, who is expected to give prompt and correct information to the above members of the public and complete their business, highly technical?"

Therefore, his business can be called technical as well as practical. The other point of view has already been put and, therefore, I need not go into it. That is that, the postman bears a very heavy pecuniary responsibility, which the telegraphist does not have to bear on his shoulders. The telegraphist's work to my mind, while of course, it is responsible work and calls for efficiency I admit, is not that kind of difficult work which the postman has to do. His is not that sort of responsibility. His work is like that of the typist, a kind of mechanical work, whereas the postman's work requires greater suppleness of mind also. These being the facts of the situation, it is certainly legitimate for the postmaster or the postman or the post mental or the post clerk, whoever he may be, to put forward his claim boldly, with full consciousness of justice being on his side, that at last a committee of inquiry should be appointed. I do not stand here with definite proposals as to how the present grievances should be redressed. I am even willing to agree with some of those who want a little change in the personnel of the Committee. I will be even satisfied if the Director-General gives an open assurance that he will sit down with two of his Assistants, two of the Indian Postal Superintendents, and give these people and their representatives a full hearing and a proper hearing for two or three or four

days, so that he may personally speak to his subordinates face to face and satisfy himself and thus give them a pleasure which otherwise they can never hope for. I, therefore, do not stand here for any particular method of inquiry or for any particular personnel of the inquiry committee. I stand here only for an inquiry and I think for that inquiry a case can be made. I will end my remarks by just reminding the Director-General of what he said in reply to the resolution which was moved in 1919 by my friend, Mr. G. S. Khaparde; and Mr. Patel also moved a resolution that year. He said in his reply to that resolution:

"Let us have a committee. Let us have the non-official members and the staff represented and go into the matter thoroughly. As members of this Council are anxious about this affair, let us have a committee to go into the question."

I assure him that not only the menials, not only the postal people, are waiting for this inquiry, but I may tell him that the same reason to which he attached so much importance before, exists even now, namely, that the Members of this Assembly are anxious about this affair, and I request him to give us the same reply. "Let us have a committee to go into the question."

(1-9-1925)

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## Railway Budget

### *Mr. N. C. Kelkar's Speech*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar (Bombay Central Division : Non-Mohammedan Rural): Sir, numerous congratulations have been bestowed upon the Honourable the Railway Member, and perhaps he has deserved them, and I do not grudge them to him. His speech contained colossal financial fi-



gures such as would strike the imagination of an ordinary man, and from that point of view perhaps his speech has been an epic-making speech. But whether it is an epic-making speech or not, it is certainly an epoch-making speech and for this reason. It has been a plain business-like statement and yet he has the honour of introducing into the administration of his country a new epoch, that is to say, a period which begins with entirely new conditions for one department of administration. That is, he has made this House responsible for quite a new starting point of arrangement. But how far is this really a new arrangement? That is the question. And my answer to that is that, in my opinion, we are certainly out of the tunnel but not yet out of the wood. What has certainly been accomplished is that the Finance Member on the one hand and the Railway Member on the other hand are perhaps quite as against each other, their interlocking has been broken. The Finance Member can no longer characterise the Railway Member as a high gambler in Railway finance, and on the other hand the Railway Member cannot blame the Finance Member for putting an excessive control upon him and checking his extensive ambitions. But in all this what has the rate-payer gained so far? That is, in my opinion, the real question. And though the Finance Member and the Railway Member have been released from each other's bondage, I think relief yet remains to come to the rate-payer in a large measure. Anyway, it seems that we have reached a definite stage, an advanced stage in the evolution of the Railway Department, and yet, as one doctrine of evolution has it, even this latest stage of development contains vestiges of all the antecedent stages of development through which this department has passed. The Railway Member has said that he resembles the chairman of a directorate of share-holders. It

is an unmixed metaphor but its merits are mixed. It is a happy metaphor but it raises unhappy associations; and so far as I am concerned I see in him the parallel of a chairman of a directorate of a joint-stock company, the like of which we have seen in plenty in Bombay and other places recently. I dare say that the Railway Member cannot, as representing Government, dare to face this House and give a satisfactory or creditable account of the stewardship of the Railway department if we take all the years of the Railway department's life together. So far as the Railway Member himself is concerned, he is no doubt the chairman of the directorate, but he differs from an ordinary chairman in many ways. He is not elected. He is appointed by Government. He enjoys a non-votable salary and a non-votable pension. Even if his Railway Company goes to rack and ruin nobody can sue him in a railway court, much less can he be impeached for his mal-administration in a criminal tribunal. The question really is, during the stewardship of the Government, as being responsible for the administration of the railways, has the Indian tax-payer, who is really the ultimate shareholder in this Company, got any satisfactory return for the money that has been put into this business? On that matter I think I can justly claim that the share-holder has been kept out of a reasonable or even a fair dividend for the last nearly fifty years. Railways have only recently begun to pay. And in this matter I will quote the testimony of a previous Finance Member himself—I mean Sir William Meyer. He said :

"On the other hand if you take Sir Dinshaw Wacha's metaphor and the people of India as shareholders in railways, you have got the fact that the share-holder went without any dividends for a long time, because as Sir Dinshaw has aptly reminded the Council, it was not until after many years that the railways began to pay and the

share-holders may quite reasonably claim that they should have some reward for their past abstinence. Also as share-holders might claim in an ordinary business, they might say 'It is all very well for you to put part of the profit into improving the business, but you must apply part of it in giving us dividends.' If the Railway budget is not to be disturbed for the needs of the General budget, why should the railways not make a fixed annual contribution to the national exchequer on a scale to be determined say every five years?"

A beginning has no doubt been made in this direction; but I am one of those who think that we are not going as far as we may in that respect. Also, I will here quote the testimony of a writer who perhaps may be condemned by some of our friends here as an *erudite professor*. We have seen that those of us who are uninformed of course are no good because we are uninformed, and some other critics who are well-informed are of course no good because they are *erudite professors*. Perhaps only the experts may reign and rule in this House. This writer says.

"There are critics of the Railway finance in India, who hold that before the railways in India could be considered on commercial principles to be a paying concern, they must make good all the losses, which the State has incurred in the past, when railway receipts did not suffice to meet even the working expenses, or the interest on the railways. At this rate,—which is by no means unreasonable from our point of view,—even the interest charge is not and cannot be met from the so-called railway surplus of profits of to-day, let alone a proper depreciation fund making up arrears of past depreciation provision. But even if we drop the question of compound interest on the loss incurred by the State for making both sides of this wasteful asset meet in the past; even if we take no account

given by a European to the Assembly some 3 or 4 years ago in which the lecturer practically censured the Assembly for overlooking the fact that ordinary wood for the use of railways, coaches and carriages, was being imported from Australia and other colonies, whereas really in India we have an ample variety of all kinds of wood for immediate use.

Then, again, the Railway administration is working in a racial spirit. It has been said that the Anglo-Indian community have got a kind of special instinct or aptitude for service in the railways. I do not know whether the Railway Board or the Railway Companies have gone into biological researches in the matter, and I do not know on what side they have found that instinct or aptitude, whether on the paternal or on the maternal side.

It has been said that in America and the other countries they do not exercise so much control over the railways as we seek to do here. That is perhaps because their railways are run by private Railway Companies. But this much we do know about the difference between America and India; and it is this, that the railway rates are so cheap in America that it is said that with one day's wage an American labourer can travel about 8 times as far as an Indian labourer can with his one day's wage. Of course there are complaints, even in America, about the mismanagement of railways, and perhaps that sort of complaints you may find all the world over. I was just reading the life of Mr. Ford, the great motor car maker, and there he says in his Chapter on the Railroads:

"The public is dissatisfied because both the passenger and freight rates are too high. The railroad employees are dissatisfied because they say their wages are too low and their hours too long. The owners of the railways are

dissatisfied because it is claimed that no adequate return is realised upon the money invested."

Now, I quite admit that nothing can be perfect in this world; and even in America Railway administration is not as successful as it may be. But, as I have pointed out just now, there is this difference between Railway administration in America and Railway administration in India that a labourer can travel about 8 times as far with one day's wage in America as an Indian labourer can with his one day's wage in India. That is ample proof that whatever mismanagement of American railways in other respects there may be, they are certainly better managed than the Indian railways at least in one respect.

Much is made about the control which we seek in this Assembly to impose upon the Railway administration, and reference has already been made to the latest Royal Commission Report upon the New South Wales Railways. But sufficient attention has not been paid to one passage though it has already been read, namely:

"They (*i. e.* the railways) should be free from the influence of either party, and when once the Chief Commissioner is appointed, he should be trusted to carry on his duties to the best of his ability and in his own way subject"—(*mark these words*)—"solely to the limitation of his powers in regard to rates and fares, staff and other matters of defined State policy."

Does the control that we seek to enforce upon the Railway administration in this House really go to any extent beyond these exceptions which have been already made in that Report? Do we ever go beyond inquiring into the powers of the Railway Commissioners in regard to rates, in regard to fares, in regard to staff and other matters? That will at once show that though the Report has been quoted in favour of proving that Railway administration should

as far as possible be free from the control of political parties—and I quite appreciate that idea that Railway administration should be as far as possible free from too much control by political parties—still I contend that we have just now touched only the fringe of the control that we may legitimately exercise upon the Railway administration. We have yet to go a long way in enforcing our control. Mr. Sim has already taken the opportunity to give us a warning that if we exercise more control over the Railway administration then the Railway Board will not be responsible for running the railways on an economic basis. Here is what he says—

“ I should like to repeat that warning that if any such policy as is proposed in this Resolution—” (*this refers to the discussion on the Railway Resolution the other day*)—“ is ever adopted, State management is bound to fail and if it does fail, the failure will be not because the management was carried on in the name of the State but because your managers were not allowed to manage.”

Now, I make a present of a return warning to Mr. Sim that whatever he may say about the improper nature of the control exercised by us upon the Railway administration, we are not to be lightly put off like that. We shall continue to enforce all the reasonable control that we can possibly command in this House over the Railway administration, and yet hold the administration responsible if the State management goes wrong. I give him that warning in all seriousness. It may be said that here in this House we are not experts, and, therefore, we are not entitled to criticise the Railway Administration. But I say in return that it is a wrong notion to expect that there could be many experts in this House consisting of representatives of different constituencies in the country. You must take the situation as you find it. We are of

the wounds and scars on the body financial inflicted in recent years have been healed. Our vitals are still aching under the pressure of the old heavy deficits, reckless loans and self-inflicted losses. But we, at any rate, now know definitely where we stand and what we have got to do to completely rehabilitate ourselves. In many things, which may be called the salient features of the financial statement laid before us on Saturday last,—in many things a spirit of reform is clearly discernible. The separation of the Railway Budget has been followed up by an attempt to put certain departments of administration on a commercial basis. Certain improvements also are well marked in the form in which the Budget is presented. But there is scope for further reforms not only in the same line but also in other lines. For preference I would mention the reform of changing the financial year from the 1st of April to the 1st of January so that the financial year and the calendar year will be coterminous and co-extensive. The Budget in that case will have to be presented on the 1st of December. The House is perhaps aware that the Chamberlain Commission on Indian Finance and Currency had actually suggested this reform. But it was apparently shelved simply because the conservative impulse of Provincial Governments proved too strong for the change. The Commission says :

“Under the present arrangement, the Indian Budget is presented before the end of March, and the Finance Minister has to prepare his estimates in ignorance of the most important factor on which the results of the year will depend ”

Lord Meston, once Finance Minister of India, gave it as his testimony before the Commission that if the financial year be changed as suggested, the Finance Minister will be able to have before him a full and complete

account of the rains and to give a slightly better and slightly stronger estimate than under the present conditions. The notorious gamble in rain will then be no more. The commission was of opinion that the present dates for preparing and presenting the Budget were almost the most inconvenient possible. The Commission of course expected that some slight administrative difficulties could be pleaded against the reform in practice; but the change (the Commission was strongly of opinion) would be a great improvement. The question of shortening the interval between the time of the preparation of the Budget and the time of its actual execution also has its own importance. The Finance Minister, I think, will himself like the arrangement more than anybody else as securing greater accuracy to his estimates.

It is a matter of satisfaction that the Postal Department is found to be not quite a losing business. But I have my own doubts as to whether the financial aspect of the Postal Department may not shine brighter, if a closer scrutiny were made of the commercial character of its operations, and of the capital charged to it. It would be interesting to know whether the Postal Department has been dealt with in exactly the same manner and on the same principles as the Railway Department for the purpose of determining its commercial character and calculating the capital to be charged to it. Happily there is no proposal this year to increase the salt-duty. The duty in fact deserves to be still more reduced, though for obvious reasons the advocates of that reform have for the present to rest on their oars. Many people in the country are convinced that salt need not be a State monopoly. They think at any rate that the poorer classes and the agricultural cattle do not get that amount of salt which is essential for their health and also as a preventive against



the difference between the embarrassment of a deficit will gladly go forward to share the Finance Minister's embarrassment with him on surpluses. Only let him not be a misanthrope and hate human company. Indeed, we think the Finance Member has really even greater cause for embarrassment than he himself believes. It must be certainly twice as embarrassing to dispose of a surplus of nearly 8 crores than a surplus of four crores, and I think the Honourable Member only underestimates his troubles. For the four crores which he has set apart for redemption and avoidance of debt is a real surplus in the sense of being a net excess of revenue over expenditure. And he will come to know in the course of the debate on the budgetary demands that the House is far from being content to divert such a big sum in the name of debt-redemption. Not only a large useful amount but also a great principle is here at stake, and the right or wrong of the situation must be earnestly fought out. The Finance Member has argued that the setting apart of four crores of rupees in the name of debt-redemption not only reduces the amount that we have to borrow, but also gives confidence to our intending and our possible creditors, in the security for the debts they would give, and thereby serves to keep down the rate of interest on new loans. But I think the House will like to differ from that view. There is, I think, no fear of our real credit being at stake. The Indian Government are still fully solvent notwithstanding their recent escapades and extravagances. Further intending creditors of the Government of India would be shrewd enough to perceive that the British Exchequer may be regarded as a second line of defence at the back of the Indian Government. If Parliament is responsible for the administration of India, it must also be responsible for its debts. It would certainly be an interesting law-point whether the Parliament

could not be held ultimately responsible for the debts of the Indian Government. For all the revenues of India legally vest in the Secretary of State for India and all the expenditure incurred by the Government of India is sanctioned by him. The Indian Government perform the functions of a mere agent in all their financial transactions. But even if we may suppose that the rights of the creditors cannot go beyond the revenues and the assets of India as being the only specific security given for the debts, the sheer banking instincts of England will not forsake her in an hour of crisis. They will tell her that the Indian Empire is quite cheap for the debts she may have to take upon herself and to liquidate. Moreover, it is simply unthinkable that a civilised Government like that of England may ever repudiate India's debts. My point is that there is no fear of India having lost her credit in the eyes of her existing or future creditors. Under normal conditions, the Government can get loans at a cheap rate of interest, and if things seemed to have altered in recent years, Government have to thank themselves for the situation. Their own schemes of extravagance, their own reckless and costly undertakings made them go in for loans at any price, so that it was Government themselves who, as it were, forced the rate of interest against themselves in the money market. Their break-neck haste in realising their constructive genius for putting the house in order was the cause of the abnormal rate of interest rather than an inherent perversity of the money market. Government must, of course, pay the penalty of their folly, but I cannot admit that the confidence of the creditors of India has been really shaken in any way.

## II

Well, what the Finance Minister has said in his statement under the heading of loans funds will be greatly

appreciated by all men of affairs. After all, all loans, for whatever party or purpose they may be raised in India, must come out of a common reserve of national saving, viewing India as one whole nation. But it is certainly a most convenient and business-like arrangement to create separate loans funds. It is an advantage for all concerned to be able to think in financial detachment. The separation of the Railway Budget will easily lead to the establishment of separate loans funds for the Railways, though of course Government will have to do the necessary administrative arrangement. But the principle and practice can be usefully extended to the loans funds not only for Provincial Governments but local self-governing bodies also.

The increase in the salaries and allowances of the Civil Services appears in the Budget and will not fail to be resented by the House in view of the Resolution passed by it last year. The great services made a great fuss by threatening to resign and prematurely retire on pension. But it was merely a theatrical gesture. It was designed only to frighten the Secretary of State into greater concessions and the trick, as we now see, has been highly successful. The sagacious rats were expected to leave the sinking ship of State in India as if it was going to be wrecked on the rock of Reforms. But soon they thought better of the situation. They discovered that the ship is fully as seaworthy after as before the Reforms, and the thought of an averted danger has only added to the plenty of the crumbs swept from a festive dinner table.

The Finance Member has not been just and equitable in the distribution of the surplus among the different claimants to it. I fail to see why no relief at all has been given to Bombay in the matter of provincial contributions. The Budget of my province has shown a deficit for this year, and even such slight relief as Bombay would

have received, might have been very opportune. It is somewhat incongruous that when the Indian Finance Member feels embarrassment as to how to dispose of his surplus, the Bombay Finance Member should have to raise money by new taxation to make up his deficit. This may be regarded as another instance of the grudge which some people believe Sir Basil Blackett rightly or wrongly entertains against Bombay and her people.

Then, again, there is the rightful claim of the cotton excise duty for relief. There can be no mistake as to what this House feels in the matter. It has already passed a Resolution in favour of the abolition of those duties and it will naturally feel slighted if the Finance Member shows scant courtesy to its deliberate and well considered decision. I am one of those who have many a grudge to square up with the average millowner, for I hate the commission agency system, I hate the inequitable agency contracts which bind shareholders, and I hate the callous indifference which he shows to the interests of labour. But we are all opposed to the excise duty not because we love the millowner, but because we want to knock down the odious principle which underlies the excise duty. We can take other cudgels to beat the millowner with, and bring him to the path of duty and righteousness.

Lastly, I will deal with one part of the Finance Member's argument viz. the subject of Exchange and Currency. I see that the appointment of a Currency Committee is coming within a few months. It may perhaps come with the Finance Member himself when he comes back from home from leave which, I hear, he is taking from next month. Better late, however, than never. In the matter of the appointment of committees of inquiry, Government always betray the paternal perversity which says to the children "Jam yesterday. Jam to-morrow. No. jam to-day."

a distressing manner from the dire consequences of the wanton liquidation of our financial resources abroad? Surely, we cannot afford to think of Sir Basil Blackett's predecessor with the same equanimity or detachment of mind as when we read the account of Nero fiddling when Rome was burning or the account of the massacre of the innocents. Our present financial helplessness and Government's imprudence are vitally connected like the Siamese twins. I can cite the testimony of others, who, at any rate, cannot be charged with prejudice. Thus, Mr. Moreton Frewen said in his lecture on the problem of exchange in 1921 that but for the Reverse Councils liquidating India's resources in London the drain on England's gold and money power would have been too enormous to bear. So also Major Grogan stated in a letter to the *London Times* in 1920

"There was no other explanation for their amazing action except on one of the following theories, namely :

- [1] A plot to whitewash the Indian Government.
- [2] Political influence leading to a premeditated policy of assisting Manchester and Dundee exports by imposing a burden equivalent to 100 per cent. sterling excise on their competitors in India
- [3] Financial influence leading to a premeditated policy of sweeping every Indian debtor into the paw of the British Banking Trust.
- [4] Subservience to some factor desperately interested in the maintenance of the high value of silver.
- [5] An organised attempt of the Indian bureaucracy surreptitiously to multiply its salaries and pensions.
- [6] All-round general nuisance on the part of the responsible authorities."

(29-1-1929)

## The 5th Bombay Provincial Postal Conference

### *Presidential Address*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar, M. L. A., the president of the Conference, delivered the following address :

Gentlemen,

I have to thank you for the honour you have done me by electing me president of the Provincial Postal Conference for this year. I am already associated with your Union Organisation as President of the Poona Postal Union, and I am thankful to you for thus bringing me into closer association with the Provincial Organisation by being invited to preside over the deliberations of this gathering.

I confess I should have preferred to be absolved from the duty of attending the Conference, as I was away from the place of my business for nearly three months already. Frequent interruptions in business put a natural discount upon efficiency in any department. But I must confess at the same time that I get some compensation for this discount in the form of the wider knowledge of the question of the grievances of the workmen of the P. D.

I only feel concerned at the prospect of the feasting and garlanding which is a usual concomitant of the proceedings of gatherings like this. For according to my friend Babu B. C. Pal, these necessarily lead or should lead to the onerous duty of taking the lead in championing your cause in the Assembly. But I may assure you that your good will, and the consciousness of helping the workmen employed in the department, must by themselves be valuable to any one than all the feasts and flowers.

I take it that you have studied the debate which was raised in the Assembly in February last over the question of the Postal grievances at the instance of Mr. Pal, who

was honoured by the ballot with its choice for moving the resolution on the subject. The debate ended hopefully, though I am not quite sure, speaking frankly, what the result would have been of an actual vote by division upon the resolution. And that, in my opinion, is all the greater reason for your thankfulness to the two heads of your department, I mean, Sir Bhupendranath Mitra and Sir Geoffrey Clarke, who dealt with the question before the Assembly in an open-minded and non-controversial manner. I was convinced by the attitude they took in the debate that while they were opposed only to the particular form of the enquiry which was demanded by the resolution of Mr Pal, they were, by no means, determined to treat the question of the need of an enquiry itself as closed. A more fightful tactician in the place of either Sir Bhupendranath or Sir Geoffrey would have taken advantage of the situation for the moment in the Assembly and pressed the opposition to an adverse vote by a division, which could easily have absolved them from the task of holding any enquiry into the matter, however informal or summary in its character. But Sir Bhupendranath Mitra gave a sympathetic turn to the debate by offering to sit with Sir G. Clarke to personally look into the grievances that may be placed before them. A motion for adjournment of the debate was thereupon moved and carried and the usefulness of the move now seems to be justified by latter events.

I understand that, as the result of the debate, permission was given to the Postal Unions to send a deputation to wait upon and discuss with Sir Bhupendranath Mitra and Sir G. Clarke, the outstanding grievances of the Postal Workers. Your accredited representatives must have already informed you, or they may soon inform you, of what happened at the private conference; and, I think,

you have reason to be generally satisfied with the treatment which your deputation received, though it is too early to make any pronouncement upon the results achieved. The conversations at the Conference are rightly regarded as confidential and we could not expect Sir B. N. Mitra to expose clues enough to allow us to form definite expectations as to what relief he is prepared to give. It is, therefore, fruitless to make any guesses as to the results, though I think, it would be perfectly legitimate for you in this Conference to deal with the very matters which formed the subject of the Deputation, on their own merits and apart from any reference to what was said by or to the deputation at the official conference.

Speaking generally the outstanding grievances of the Postal Workers may be classed under two heads :

- (1) Those relating to service conditions generally and apart from salaries and allowances, and
- (2) Those relating to the salaries and allowances themselves.

And here at the outset I may tell you that there are two schools of opinion holding different views among the non-official members of the Assembly on the question of the minima and maxima of salaries and allowances that may be conceded to the Postal Workers, though on the subject of the general conditions of the service there are no divided counsels, but almost unanimity of opinion. The service condition is something which the Postal department is entitled to claim in common with most of the Government departments; and when they do not have to be expressed in or lead to heavy financial results, they can be advocated without any complication. But the same is not the case with regard to the demand for the scales of salaries and allowances. Here a question of economy naturally comes in and one class of members of the



Assembly, including even some who are elected members, seem to be inclined to the view that these demands must be tested and judged by a rigorous standard.

But let me first deal with the question of service conditions.

Among the grievances relating to service conditions the following may be stated as typical ones—(1) want of sufficient holidays, (2) want of adequate leave reserve, (3) night duty, (4) unworkable time test, (5) long beats and continuous touring for village Postmen, (6) want of adequate protection and consequent risk. I have no doubt that these and similar grievances will form a subject of your deliberations. But I will ask you to put forward concrete and only reasonable proposals, so that they may have a chance of sympathetic consideration. As regards holidays, I am one of those who think that the public may be denied the luxury and the privilege of dealings with the Post Office on recognised holidays rather than that the Postal Workers be deprived of their share of leisure and social enjoyment. I am myself a member of the public and keenly susceptible to the pleasure of receiving my letters and newspapers on a holiday. But I cannot forget that in order that I may get this pleasure, some one else has to toil for me even on a holiday. If it were, therefore, a matter of a plebiscite, I would vote for absolute shutting up of the Post Office on a few stated days in the year, the days being of course chosen with discrimination.

I consider it even a greater grievance that a Postal Worker should not be assured of his due leave when he wants it. Two days ago I read in the *Times of India* a plea in the name of economy against what was considered an indulgence by Postal Workers in the practice of enjoying leave. A case was actually cited in which ridi-

culous results were made to appear through the freest operation of the leave rules. But as against this one rare and extreme case there may be scores of cases of usual occurrence in which Postal Workmen could be shown to have been put to great inconvenience and possibly loss of health owing to the denial of timely release from duty. Economy based on such denial must be very bad economy if we take into consideration the good will of the worker; and I trust that you will take steps to collect instances of the denial of due and timely leave in order to demolish the misleading allegations about the abuse of leave concessions and privileges by the Postal Workmen. As regards night duty, I do not think that it is not a necessary incident of Postal duty in certain localities. We meet with this incident in some other departments as well. The utmost that could be asked for under this head is an adequate set-off in the hours of duty. If it be true that a village Postman has to do continuous touring for three or four days before he could return to his head-quarters the case certainly deserves consideration. The Postman in this case would seem to require an extra allowance, for he must be finding it difficult to get cooked meals, especially in these days, when a new and a bad spirit is abroad and the old traditions of courtesy and hospitality are gradually disappearing. I do not quite see how adequate protection can be given to Postmen touring with cash in their charge, but perhaps help may be given through the friendly offices of the village Police and the official Police Patils.

It is strange again that Government have not yet seen it fit to inaugurate the Provident Fund system for that class of Postal Workers who are not technically on the permanent establishment though actually rendering a life-long service. The really hard times for employees in

any department are those when age advances, the physique becomes exhausted and liable to disease, when the family expands and leads to increase in expenditure, and yet the pillar of the family is face to face with a break-down leading to unemployment and a cutting off of the usual source of income. Surely it would not be unreasonable to expect that at the end of a fixed and long period of service the Postal Employees should be able to command a gratuity representing at least twelve months' pay and a bonus made up partly by his own compulsory saving and a contribution from the State funds. But I do not like to go into further details.

As regards the scales of salaries and allowances I quite see the force of the argument that the minima of these do not fall below those of the employees in some other departments of the local Governments or in private service, but the argument must equally apply to some other departments of Government service in which the minima and maxima are much higher, and so long as one department seems to be more favoured than another, there will be room for legitimate complaint. If the principle of the Bazar-Price-recruit were strictly enforced all round in all the departments, none need complain. But while, as shown above, the practice is not uniform as regards the minima and maxima salaries in all the departments, the valuable principle seems to be lost sight of so far as the higher grades of services are concerned. It is the over-head charges in the departments that are really the source of financial embarrassment to Government. The staff in the lower grades demands practically nothing more than a living wage, and if Government be really bent upon economy, they should apply their pruning knife to the higher establishments. All the same, I would ask you to take up the challenge of comparison

and prove by facts and figures to the authorities concerned that your demands are not really excessive

Finally, I would ask you in this Conference to concentrate your attention upon a few well-selected central points in the controversy and to give the go-bye to hackneyed and miscellaneous matters. Happily Sir Bhupendranath Mitra does not wish to hustle you or himself. He is apparently taking some time to consider the matters laid before him by your deputation. And you can, therefore, use the interval to your advantage by preparing your case on some of the points which may have emerged in the discussion with the deputation as points of difficulty. That the heads of the department mean well is a good augury for your cause. And personally I shall feel happy if I can be of any use to you when the matter may come up again before the Assembly in any form. (*Baroda, 12-4-1925*)

### Contempt of Courts Bill

#### *Speech in the Legislative Assembly*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : Sir, I just want to contribute a few points to the discussion of this Bill. My first remark would be that this is an instance of the legislative fury which has been exhibited by the Legislative Department during the present session. That accounts, in my opinion, for the motley crowd of Bills that are now before this Assembly this session.

Mr. L. Graham, Legislative Secretary : May I point out to the Honourable Member that the Legislative Department does not initiate Bills ?

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : My Honourable friend is aware that one Department of Government may share its responsibility with another.

Coming to the Bill itself, my first point is that the Preamble and the Statement of Objects and Reasons are entirely misleading, not perhaps the Preamble so much as the Statement of Objects and Reasons. If Government really wanted to do all that they want to do, they should have expressly said so in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, which, however, they have not done. If you look at the Preamble you will find it therein stated :

"Whereas doubts have arisen as to the power of a High Court of Judicature to punish contempts of subordinate Courts;

And whereas it is expedient to resolve these doubts and to define and limit the powers exercisable by a High Court and other superior Courts in punishing contempts of Courts. It is hereby enacted as follows."

What is on the forefront of the preamble is a desire or anxiety to reconcile certain conflicting judgments in the matter of Contempt of Court. But if you go into the details of the Bill you will find that much more has been imported into the body of the Bill than is vouched for by the Preamble. The more objectionable features of the Bill appear to have been introduced, incidentally or, as it were, without any set or definite purpose. The matters introduced are certainly in excess of the objects which the Bill is intended to serve judging by the Preamble and Statement of Objects and Reasons. If there was really any doubt as to the powers of certain superior Courts to take cognisance of and punish contempts of Court in Subordinate Courts, the Bill should have been confined only to that purpose. in which case, a Bill of that character could not have been objected to by any side of this House. But even that was perhaps unnecessary, because, at present, *ex hypothesi*, the chartered High Courts have got that power. They have got full power in this matter. What-

ever view one High Court may express as against another, every High Court has got complete power to do what it likes, and contempt of Court not being a statutory matter in its essential stage, the High Courts may go on doing what they like. One High Court may take cognisance of contempts committed in lower courts, while another High Court may not, but the conflict would not be so serious as to necessitate a Bill of this character.

As I have said, if the Bill were, however, restricted only to a reconciliation of the conflict between the judgments of the different High Courts, I for one would not have objected to it. The Bill, however, seeks to do three more things, and those are matters which, as I have said, are being imported into the Bill, and which are not vouched for by the Preamble or the Statement of Objects and Reasons. First of all, there is the definition of "Contempt of Court." Of course, if you introduced a Bill to deal with these things, you might very well say that you cannot do without a definition. But there are definitions and definitions, and as I shall later on point out, the definition, to my mind, is very objectionable. Secondly, there is an attempt to extend artificial and unjust protection to inferior tribunals, and the third matter that is introduced is the revival by enactment of an absolute jurisdiction and the elevation of what was an exception into a regular rule. Mr. Ashworth has pointed out a slight inaccuracy in the statement made by Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar that the contempt of Court jurisdiction has become obsolete in England. Mr. Chetty also has rightly pointed out that that is not wholly the case. It is true to a certain extent, but only is so far as one aspect of the case is concerned. Mr. Ashworth, however, contented himself, as must have been observed, with only a reference to proceedings pending before a Court. I too admit that in England that juris-

diction has not yet become obsolete, and Courts very often and most vigorously and actively exercise the power of punishing contempts of Court, whenever they amount to an active obstruction in the administration of justice itself. But the real point of Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, when he said that jurisdiction was obsolete, was that Courts in England very rarely took cognisance of what is called the scandalising of Courts, that is to say, offering criticisms, free criticisms, even offensive criticisms upon cases that have passed out of the hands of the Court. The need of salutary reconciliation of conflicting case law, it will thus be seen, has been ingenuously exploited as pretext for widening the scope of the substantive penal law as well as its jurisdiction. All Courts, inferior as well as superior, have at present quite ample powers to deal with contempts in the nature of actual obstruction to the administration of justice in pending cases. Mark the words, 'in pending cases.' The Penal Code provides for the punishment by inferior Courts of contempts of Court committed while the proceedings are going on. And supposing that there were omissions or defects in the provisions on the subject it would have been quite fair and right of Government to amplify the law specifically on the particular point, and there would have been, in my opinion, no objection whatever to thus amplifying the provisions that are already there for that particular purpose.

But our real objection is to giving protection to courts after the cases before the Courts are decided, for then here as in England they must be left and handed over to general public opinion for criticism. Now, it may be said that even after cases have been decided by Courts, and when critics come forward to criticise judgments of Courts the critics may be so unfair as to commit slander or defamation of the judicial officers concerned. Perhaps

that is true. But, for malicious defamation and undue scandalisation of judicial officers there is, I think, redress even now under the civil and criminal law of defamation. There is absolutely nothing to prevent a judicial officer from resorting to a civil court or to a criminal court and filing a suit or a criminal complaint, as the case may be, for vindicating his own honour. These officers, I take it, know full well their own rights and they are also exercising them. If you look around the provinces you will find that Government have recently initiated a very vigorous policy of encouraging judicial and other officers to lodge complaints and civil suits against newspaper critics. In many cases, as perhaps the Home Member is aware, Government have been financing these officers to defend their honour and to vindicate their character and even legal assistance is amply given to the judicial officers. If that is the case, if that cannot be denied, I do not see what necessity there is for giving these officers extraordinary and artificial protection of the character which is contemplated by the present Bill. My point against giving this extraordinary protection to judicial officers is that if you do that you take away, in my opinion, the last trace of control in the form of wholesome criticism of the press and the public upon their judicial decisions. The definition of contempt is too wide as it is worded. It includes matters of contempt and ridicule, even inherent or natural defects in the persons acting as judicial officers. The wording is:

"Anybody who either says certain words or does certain things with the intention of bringing a judicial officer into contempt or the probable consequence of which is to bring the officer into contempt."

There it is contempt of Court. But here you will see that sometimes the real responsibility for the feelings



of contempt and ridicule may rest rather subjectively with the officer himself than with the critic. However, in cases where judicial officers have been, in their opinion, unfairly criticised by critics they can certainly resort to both the civil and the criminal law for vindicating their honour. The Bombay High Court has already held in one case that the law of defamation and slander is almost approximate to the law of Contempt of Court. Now, judicial officers have under the present law one more thing in their favour and it is this. In cases of contempt, the defendant does not get the benefit of matters of privilege which in the case of private suits or complaints are available to the defendant or the accused. If judicial officers take proceedings under this law then the accused would not, I contend, get the benefit of privilege which he would ordinarily get if it were a mere case of defamation or slander in a civil or a criminal Court. I would say, further, that after all both parties to this affair are human. The judges are human, the critics are human. Now, if the critics are not to forget themselves, should it not be provided that the judges also should not forget themselves? And equally, by parity of reasoning, if the judges forget themselves, the critics may also be allowed to forget themselves for a while. The press of course is the "fourth estate." The judges form part of one estate of the realm, the press forms part of another; and I suppose the rights and obligations of one part of the realm may fairly be balanced against the rights and privileges of another constituent of the realm. And, therefore, my contention is that Government ought not to be so severe against the public press in the matter of criticising judgments in cases where the proceedings are not pending but have been finished.

Now on this point—of scandalising judicial officers after trials before them are finished,—I will just refer this

House to one, or two instances in point. Of course they are English instances and not Indian instances. They will show, however, that judges sometimes forget themselves in England also. Take the case of Mr. Justice McCardie. The House perhaps is well acquainted with that case. In respect of this judicial performance of Mr. Justice McCardie, Mr. Massingham, writing in the *Daily Herald*, has criticised the implied censure of the State Secretary for India, indulged in by Mr. Justice McCardie, as "a quite gratuitous political opinion pronounced without evidence" and judicial opinion on the Dyer case and that this pronouncement was to say whether the High Court Judges here also may not forget themselves when performing judicial duties. Mr. Bernard Houghton, writing in the same paper, says that "Mr. Justice McCardie has stated the common opinion of the ruling classes in Britain and India which was of course a non-judicial act;" and Mr. H. G. Wells, writing in the *Westminster Gazette*, says that "Mr. Justice McCardie pronounced an extra-judicial opinion on the Dyer case and that this pronouncement was a lawless outbreak on the part of the Court." I again repeat the words that "this pronouncement was a lawless outbreak on the part of the Court." And yet the High Court in England has not thought it fit to stand up for the dignity of the Court and to summon any of these critics for contempt of court. My point, therefore, is that the dignity of a judicial Court ought not to be overstressed or overstretched where the proceedings have already come to a finish.

Now many members of this House are familiar with the conduct of judges when they sit on the Bench. Judges often behave in a way as if they were not amenable to any law, as if they are the incarnations of the King who is supposed to do no wrong. Judges abuse their authority

and privileged position in three ways at least. They slander and abuse the parties, the Court officers, sometimes even pleaders and counsel all of whom have practically no protection against the judges. This is an abuse of their powers. Secondly, they themselves in their personal remarks provoke contempt or ridicule, and are then angry if their critics indulge in a little bit of ridicule in return. Thirdly, judges are often guilty of non-judicial conduct on the Bench, about which I have already read out to you one or two passages. I just came across something about Justice Darling also, another great Judge of the London High Court, and the criticism that I am now going to read to you is from another Judge of a High Court, Mr. Justice Beaman. In a recent issue of the Bombay Law Journal, I find this.

"The decline of the English Courts may be said to have dated from the plebiscite appointment of Lord Darling as the inimitable Court jester. It is true that this inenviable notoriety went largely beyond the unfortunate recipient's merits. For, notwithstanding the storm of public criticism with which his elevation to the Bench was greeted, Lord Darling was, I believe, a very good judge, but early having obtained the reputation of a wit, it clung malignantly to him throughout his long judicial career. In earlier days this would not much have mattered. But that career synchronised, unfortunately, with the rapid developments of the sensational press. The public only know Mr. Justice Darling, as reported for their delectation in the inferior papers. Thus mirrored, posterity, were there no other record, might be pardoned for thinking him a great jester rather than a great judge. No judge can be constantly witty, even facetious for year after year, and while some of Lord Darling's 'mots' were pretty enough, the endless strain of being

puts an end to it, as it defines and limits punishment. That, I say, is a good point about the Bill. For instance, I want severely to criticise a judge. I can say to myself "Here is six months' imprisonment and Rs. 1000 fine."

Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas (Sind: non-Mahomedan): Where is Rs. 1000 ? It is unlimited.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : I accept the correction; the fine is unlimited, but the imprisonment, at any rate, is limited. What is the state of things at present ? You criticise a judge. You think you are right. The Court says "No, we hold you guilty." What is the consequence ? I may be prepared to suffer a definite penalty and say I am quits with the judge. But I cannot. But certainly it should be in my power to say that the opinion I hold about the judge's conduct is right. If I were bold enough, if I were public-spirited enough, I would say I would accept jail rather than undergo humiliation. But under the existing state of things, the High Court would not let me out of jail though I undergo a definite sentence unless I am prepared to make an apology to the Court which in some cases would be a hypocritical and an insincere apology. I do not know what benefit the High Court would receive from an apology like that. But it is in the power of the High Court at present to compel a man to submit to an apology. Therefore, I say that there is one good point about the present Bill which I certainly like.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Which you have learnt at your own cost, I believe.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: I am not going to indulge in personalities. But my point is this, that this small redeeming feature of the Bill cannot outweigh the other grave defects in the Bill and, therefore, I am opposing it. The Bill seems to put a judicial officer on a par with the

speech, and in that speech I will, in the first place, show exactly how my own amendment stands in relation to the original proposition and the amendment that has just now been proposed.

Mr. President : Will the Honourable Member begin by moving his amendment ?

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : According to the direction of the Chair, I have taken out the extraneous matter, and I will read the amendment.

" That for the original Resolution the following be substituted :

' This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that he be pleased to accept as the ultimate policy of the Government the prohibition of production, manufacture, sale and import of intoxicating liquors save for medical and scientific purposes. It further recommends that as the first step in carrying out this policy the Provincial Governments be directed immediately (i) to inaugurate a policy of vesting the power of fixing, by a system of local option, the location and number of shops selling intoxicating liquors in either local Self-governing Bodies or licensing Boards, specially constituted for the purpose and elected on a popular franchise, and (ii) to undertake necessary legislation in furtherance of that policy.' "

The defect, Sir, as I think, of the original proposition seems to me to be this, that it might suggest to the Assembly a peremptory time-limit for introducing prohibition. But though I advocate prohibition, I cannot unfortunately expect that prohibition will come so soon. It is bound to take time even if the fundamental principle be now accepted. The Resolution also has this additional defect that it makes no mention of the medicinal needs of spirits, which must, of course, be provided for. As for

Dr. Datta's amendment, it goes into details which may be disputed, and I do not want the proposition to be lost in disputation over details. Ten years perhaps may be a short time for the complete establishment of prohibition. He mentions legislation only in connection with drugs—of course that is out of courts now—and leaves the import of foreign liquors to mere executive control. But Dr. Datta will see that I look at the matter almost from the same angle of vision as he himself does. Colonel Crawford's amendment has been declared to be out of order. But though I cannot criticize the amendment itself, I can, as part of my argument, criticize the mind which has been disclosed by that amendment. In fact, the state of mind disclosed by his amendment is to me a message of despair. It practically negatives the fundamental principle which underlies the present question. He has put himself out of court with the rules of this Assembly, and I suppose he will put himself out of court also with the public outside. He seems to assume that prohibition is out of the question and that it ought not to come at any conceivable time, and he apparently thinks that all classes in India would take the same view of the matter as he himself does. He assumes that the present control by Government over liquor, over the foreign liquor traffic, is efficient, and he only gives a certificate to that efficiency by blandly wishing a continuance of it. Now as for my own amendment, I would say this, that it follows the lines of least resistance. It does not fix any inexorable time-limit. It makes provision for the medicinal needs of spirits. It does not suggest immediate central legislation. It takes account of the fact that Excise is a provincial subject and does not ask the Central Government to do things over the heads of the Provincial Governments. It raises, therefore, only two clear issues :

- (1) Whether Government are not prepared to accept prohibition as only an ultimate objective, which means a pretty distant objective. But even more challenging than that is the following issue—
- (2) Whether they are not prepared to allow the voters in this country to be the arbiters of their destiny in this simple question of drink.

Therefore, I take what is in fact a middle course and what I think is only a reasonable view of the matter. I cannot accept this position, as Colonel Crawford insinuates, that there is to be no prohibition in India at any conceivable time or for any class of people. On the other hand, I do not fancy that the millenium will come merely by immediate legislation, or that all classes in India will submit to it with equal readiness. I would like to make it perfectly clear that the pivot of my hope is the reasoned and well-considered judgment of the voter in India, and for him I claim nothing more in this simple matter than has already been conceded to him by Government themselves in matters of graver moment—I claim for him responsibility, that is to say the full authority and freedom of decision and full liability to take the consequences. I wish also to make it clear that when I ask for freedom of decision for the voter, I do not ask it only for him who will veto and repudiate liquor but also for him who will have the frankness and the boldness to ask for it. The positive in this matter is a necessary and logical implication of the negative. For I know that there are certain classes of people even among Indians who may resent prohibition as an encroachment upon their rights and as a supercilious puritanical fad. And when I am prepared to make that allowance for the people of my own country, which was for centuries essentially anti-drink in practice as well as precept, I would certainly be prepared to make ample

allowance for the class of people whom Colonel Crawford represents. Do I not know that the Europeans in India would, with a handful of exceptions, revolt against prohibition almost to a man? Their traditions for centuries have been steeped and soaked in liquor. They regard drink as the heirloom of their ancestry and the cherished gift which they would leave to their posterity. (Laughter.) They have always clung to the worshipful trinity of the Bible, the Bottle and the Bayonet. They are true disciples of Omar Khayyam, the Persian poet, who sings :

" Ah, fill the cup ! What boots is to repeat,  
How time is sleeping underneath our feet.  
Upborn to-morrow and dead yesterday,  
Why fret about them, if to-day be sweet ? "

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member):  
Whose religion is that ?

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : And whose sense of science, religion and philosophy has been thus finely expressed :

" The grape that can with logic absolute  
The two and seventy jarring sects confute,  
The subtle alchemist that in a trice  
Life's leaden metal into gold transmute. "

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett : Which religion does he belong to ?

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : A sect of Mohammedanism, I suppose. But you are his disciples.

To the Englishman a half-filled cup is an insult to his guest and an empty wine cup is a disgraceful defection in his sense of hospitality. A temperance motto is a blot on his escutcheon. He feels that to toast his sovereign with anything less spirited than spirit is akin to high treason. And he may very well drive authority for his doctrine even from the Bible, for as I have read the Bible myself, I do not think it supports prohibition. Drink was



taken at the Last Supper of the Lord. It has been commanded by St. Paul; it has been used by Noah. It has been mentioned in the Psalms as a "gift sent to gladden the heart of man." And, therefore, I take it that Europeans would "not allow Pussyfoot Johnson to assume the role of a 20th century Moses, adding an eleventh commandment to the Decalogue." It would, therefore, be almost blasphemous for me to seek to induce, much more so to force, the European out of his earthly paradise. I am prepared to leave him severely alone, but only for the present. I would leave him to be stewed in his own juice if he likes. But may I not claim equal freedom .?

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Equal freedom for all.*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : Of choice for the bulk of my own people who, I know, are averse to drink, and would like to keep not only their houses but their surroundings clear of what they regard as an abomination? Freedom is a two-edged sword. Like electricity, it has two polar points called "yea" and "nay." I may remind Colonel Crawford that the word temperance, as Colonel Crawford has used it in his amendment, is a charming but a misleading word. I do not think that the temperance movement even in Europe accepts the word temperance as meaning only the use of a moderate measure of drink. Temperance does not mean *moderation*, but *teetotalism*. (*Voices: "No."*) I think even the ignorant Tommy of the British Army understands it, and there is, therefore, greater reason why an educated civilian should know it and understand it in that sense.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: He may misunderstand it. But that is not the meaning. I assure the Honourable Member.*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : The intellect of the temperance men tells them that such a thing as a golden mean in the

use of a drink may be conceivable but their instinct advises them aright. Their prudence prefers prevention rather than cure. In America prohibition has not been suggested by moral faddists or by deductive ethics, but by sheer practical experience and economic considerations. It is easy to magnify the isolated instances of America's failure in her heroic struggle. But the heroic fight which she has put up so long deserves broad sympathy rather than lynx-eyed criticism. The experience of America should only reinforce the instinct of India. Drink may not have been totally absent from India at any time, but whereas it is the rule in western countries, in India it is only the exception. Does that make no difference? The majority, by exercising the right of local option, would not be tyrannising a minority, but only saving itself from the tyranny of that minority. Local option means freedom for the voiceless underdog. But the immediate need is to allow people to say and enforce that drink may not remain in their area, wherever else it may be. Government, who have set up six million voters on their feet, and profess to trust them with responsible political government is surely estopped from saying that they are unfit to declare how many liquorshops there may be in their area and where they may be located. And things have indeed advanced farther than my friend Colonel Crawford would like to believe. The Bombay Government have already accepted the policy of prohibition as an ultimate objective. There can be no question about that. In a speech recently delivered at Sholapur the Governor of my province says this :

" With reference to your remarks on the subject of the drink evil, I would remind you that my Government have declared total prohibition to be the ultimate goal of their excise policy. "

Practically, you will see, these are the very words which have been incorporated in this Resolution, and, therefore, the Government of India cannot now very well deny and repudiate what a Provincial Governor has said, for, I believe, when he speaks, he speaks not only for his own province but practically for the Government of India.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett : Certainly not for the Government of India.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar . The Governor goes on .

“ Let me assure you, however, that we are at all times prepared to consider any well-thought out scheme of local option framed on sound financial lines ”

In this speech, therefore, as you might have just noticed, the Governor of Bombay has put forward only the special plea of finance . But let provincial autonomy be granted and the provincial electors will take up the challenge. They will take care both of provincial finance and their own reputation as a non-drinking people. Real and good money will be provided, however, by prohibition rather than by the liquor trade and traffic. And here I will quote a very good and pertinent authority on this subject. Sir Arthur Newsholme, M. D., Principal Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, in his book “The Ministry of Health ” says .

“ If this country were , like the United States, to go dry, the money for housing the poor would be at once forthcoming, and short of this by reduction of our national drink bill by half the housing difficulty would be solved. Can there be any doubt that the liquor trade paralyses the hand of the social reformer ? ”

I warn, therefore, Colonel Crawford, and those whom he represented that they must be prepared for prohibition some time or other if the progress of Self-government continues. Local option is only like the gentle breeze

that separates the chaff from the grain. But no quarter can be given, no half-way measures can be taken, when the real prohibition begins. Prohibition will then be not like a gentle breeze that separates chaff from the grain, but it will be like a whirl-wind which gathers all the leaves of the forest, dry as well as wet.

(20-9-1925)

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### Pundit Nehru and Responsive Co-operation

Under the auspices of the Aryan Excelsior League at the Marwadi Vidyalaya Hall on 2nd inst., Mr. N. C. Kelkar delivered a lecture on Responsive Co-operation. Mr. G. B. Pradhan, M. L. C., of Thana presided.

Mr. Kelkar in his opening remarks, said that at Pandit Nehru's invitation he had seen Panditji once already, and was going to meet him again on Friday in a conference along with Messrs. Aney, Jaykar and Munje. He was, Mr. Kelkar said, accepted by common consent to be a peace-loving man; and even in this very crucial matter he would go as far as he could, to make up his differences with his colleagues of the Swarajya Party out of regard for the National interest.

But was not the irony significant that even a peace-loving man like him should have, as in this case, to stand up for a fight with a determination to stake everything upon its result? The fact of the matter was that the present controversy was forced upon him by Panditji by his propagandist tour immediately after an amicable understanding was reached at the Nagpur meeting. The tour opened the seal over the bandaged wound. Panditji was apparently obsessed with vanity to display his surgical

skill in amputating what he chose to regard a diseased limb. He also had affected the skill of a physician who was out to kill the poison of Responsive Co-operation. But he was only like the mediæval medicine-man who, in the words of the author of *Hudibras*, avowed 'I cut, I blister and I bleed.'

Panditji's performances, in his lectures and conversations, were unnecessarily inflammatory, and calculated to give a bitter turn to the controversy. His personal attacks were unjustifiable. Mr. Kelkar cited as an illustration Panditji's statement at Chanda that he—Mr. Kelkar—was actuated to the present quarrel because he was disappointed in his ambition to become the President of the Assembly. Mr. Kelkar denounced this as an unmitigated untruth absolutely unworthy of a man of Panditji's position. The real fact was that Mr. Kelkar never even dreamt of being suggested a candidate for the post until Panditji himself sent for and told Mr. Kelkar that the Pandit personally preferred the speaker to Mr. Patel and that for the additional reason that he was likely to get a larger number of Independent votes than Mr. Patel. Panditji's attack and attribution of personal motives must lower him in public estimation as an unfair opponent in controversy.

If, Mr. Kelkar further said, Panditji had not undertaken his lecturing tour neither the speaker nor Mr. Aney nor Mr. Jaykar would have been obliged to put the present vigour in the controversy on their own part. The speaker had never made a secret of his preference for Responsive Co-operation, and as no immediate acceptance of office was proposed there was time enough for the variety of opinions on the subject to adjust themselves by the end of 1926 on the eve of the next general elections. But evidently Panditji felt ill at ease in his mind about his own doings as the leader of the Swarajya party, and his

outburst of wrath against Messrs. Kelkar and Jaykar was not so much for *their* views as for the rude shaking which was accelerated in his own views. Messrs. Jaykar and Kelkar were to be punished not so much because they transgressed the thin line of Party discipline, but because they exposed the skeleton in Panditji's cupboard. Throughout his lecturing tour Panditji could not say a word in justification of the policy which he gradually persuaded the Party to accept—a policy approved indeed by Messrs. Kelkar and Jaykar as being on right constructive lines but stigmatised by Panditji's critics as a hopeless dilution of the original avowals. Panditji might claim his policy to be still spirited, but his critics were openly saying that the spirits were ninety degrees under proof. His real controversy, therefore, was not so much with Messrs. Kelkar and Jaykar as with his No-changer and Independent critics. And because Panditji could not satisfactorily answer them, he sought to camouflage and cover his discomfiture by the fire works of disciplinary action. Autocratic rulers and unsuccessful administrators all the world over, it was well known, resorted to military operations abroad to divert the attention of their opponents from home politics. Messrs. Kelkar and Jaykar were to be sacrificed as scape-goats simply because Panditji was unable, as the high priest of the Swarajya Party, to satisfy the reactionary cravings of his No-changer critics. If Panditji had real confidence in the merits of his own policy and his beautifully progressing constructive career, he would not have sought to put a gag on Messrs. Kelkar and Jaykar in the name of Party discipline and suppressed their opinions. He would have said "Our slightly differing views are before the public, and even in a political party views may differ according to the temperament and the mood of the man. But even-

tually the electors will judge and choose between our policies." Panditji's petulance and irritability was an obvious token of his consciousness that he himself was on slippery and uncertain ground.

As for Responsive Co-operation, Mr. Kelkar said that whenever he put forward his views on this question he had not in his mind the slightest consciousness of provincial pride or of the policy being traced to a particular great personality. Responsive Co-operation was neither more nor less than a terse, succinct and, therefore, convenient name for a particular body of principles as much as any other similar phrase. Responsive Co-operation was certainly not more difficult to be understood by a Swarajist than the word Non-co-operation was for the classes and masses who had at every moment of their life to come into contact with Government administration. It was, in the case of a Swarajist, only the logical conclusion of the policy he had been so long pursuing. If the Reforms were suggested to be worked, it was not because they were not unsatisfactory or disappointing, but because it would be an advantage to work them even as such, and use them as a handle to force further Reforms. The Reforms were to be worked because the present stalemate led nowhere. The occupation of a no man's land created a new vantage ground. A change in tactics was always necessary, and it was not necessarily a sign of consciousness of weakness or even of a feeling of being tired in the struggle. In the Laboratory experiment of resistance with the help of Reformed Councils, why should we not, Mr. Kelkar asked, turn our hand and attention to some of the battery calls which have admittedly remained neglected? After the interlude of the experiment of Non-co-operation, inaugurated and afterwards laid aside by Mahatma Gandhi,

it was quite natural for the political mind in the country to think of the untried policy enunciated by the Amritsar Congress in 1919. So far as the Speaker was concerned that policy had never ceased to haunt his mind. Its voice was naturally heard more loudly and clearly when the noise of Non-co-operation had subsided, and it was reasonable to expect that a touch of the floating consciousness of the Amritsar Congress might give some useful inspiration at this critical moment, because that was a policy to which Gandhi, Tilak and Das had agreed as a compromise crystallising the collective wisdom of the policies represented by the three great leaders.

Mr. Kelkar then proceeded to explain point by point how the Swarajists were already occupying and using every point of vantage in the field of Local Self-government and the Legislative Council, and how acceptance of Ministries and working them for all their worth was only a further step in the right direction. He alluded to the advice given by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and accepted by Panditji himself in his Amritsar address that acceptance of office was not in any sense or degree an admission of satisfaction with the present position. The struggle for further Reforms and the present use of available offices were in no sense contradictory but would smoothly run on parallel lines lending force to each other through occasional points of contact.

Mr. Kelkar emphasised the contention that acceptance of office was neither intended nor calculated to be inconsistent with the idea of civil disobedience. The present conditions were, by common consent, not very propitious for a movement of mass civil disobedience. But as for isolated movements of such resistance there was natural scope if Government did not improve; and stout-hearted people there would be found in every province and



sub-province to assert their rights against Government, to protest against injustice, and to advance their local or national interests by movements of resistance which might be, as they also should be, spontaneous and limited to definite objects. He ridiculed the arm-chair instigators of civil disobedience who had so far given no evidence of their personal readiness for sacrifice and indulged in tall talk at other people's expense. He always respected advocates of civil disobedience who had proved their worth.

In conclusion, Mr. Kelkar said that he was insisting upon remaining a member of the Swarajya Party until actually expelled therefrom. He was, therefore, not going to join any party. Even after the possible expulsion from the Swarajya Party, he would be content to plough his lonely furrow in the full confidence that his view would ultimately prevail. He was not prepared to create any new party obligations, though he heartily welcomed such independent support to his views as might come like a windfall from influential sympathisers. The only workable Party in his opinion was a party like the old Nationalist Party in India on which all provinces were represented with a kind of loose affiliation but with natural binding sympathies and a definite objective of pushing forward the national cause in a variety of methods appropriate and suitable to each working unit or working group.

(6-12-1935)

## Programme of Responsive Co-operation

Mr. N. C. Kelkar in an interview with the Correspondent of the *Indian Daily Mail* said as follows:—

"I appreciate and also reciprocate the feeling of regret which Pandit Motilal Nehru has expressed in an interview given to a press representative that he, the Leader and I, the Deputy Leader, of the Swarajya Party in the Legislative Assembly, had to part company. But that was perhaps inevitable. For, we were both being drawn by our convictions more and more in opposite directions. His interpretation and mine, of the policy and programme hitherto actually followed by the Swarajya Party, could not agree. He interpreted it as pure obstruction and I interpreted it as good constructive work and also beneficent obstruction. The logical extension of his policy lay in the direction of stiffening his attitude, while that of my policy lay in the acceptance of office to complete the task of working the reforms for what they are worth, in order to hasten the advent of Swarajya. I maintain that his continuance of his work on the Skeen Committee, though I personally approve of it, is highly inconsistent with his so-called policy of obstruction, but that has become almost a sore point with him and, therefore, I will not stress it any further. But it is a matter between him and the no-changers and the so-called 'pacca' Swarajists who supported him at Cawnpore, and a numerical majority in a constituted body can, it is well-known, cover a multitude of sins of bad logic.

### *Deck Cleared For Action*

On the other hand, being in a minority, the only honourable course open to me was to resign my seat in the Assembly and to free myself from party commitments. By my resignation I feel as if I have cleared the deck for

action. I may add, however, that by my present resignation, I have only terminated a second life, which I had got from Pandit Nehru himself by his not actually forwarding the resignation which I, along with several Swarajists, had placed in his hands at Simla three months ago. The public will, therefore, at least do me the justice to believe that, though I am a Council-walla a seat in the Council has really *no irresistible attractions for me*. Some people chose to call me a place-hunter. I spurn that aspersion with contempt. The public will see that the only place I had in my hand, I voluntarily gave up *not once but twice*.

*An Amused Spectator of the Cawnpore Congress*

As for the Cawnpore Congress, I still say, that after the meeting of the Swarajya Party Council was over, I remained but an amused spectator of the Congress, because though I knew the fate of Responsive Co-operation, I could not smile at the funny turn things were taking, with M. Gandhi feeling that he was being taken to a slaughter-house, with the stalwart no-changers feeling that M. Gandhi had sold them, with the opportunist no-changers forgetting themselves and their trumpeted creed in the impulse to take revenge upon the Maharashtra party, and with Pandit Nehru writhing and wriggling to justify his indefensible policy, like an accused person on trial, though he was absolutely sure of a majority owing to his pact with his political patron and benefactor.

—M Gandhi.

*The prestige of the Congress now lower than ever*

The Congress ended amid exactly two contradictory pronouncements from the public. Some said Mr. Gandhi had recaptured Pandit Nehru; others said Pandit Nehru had put Mr. Gandhi in his pocket. But the poor Congress was clean forgotten in this mutual bid for conquest and I venture to say that the prestige of the Congress is

just at this moment lower than ever before. The Congress is, in my opinion, unkindly pitted with its half-hearted, inconsequential, unsound resolution against a knowing electorate.

*An Unstatesmanlike Challenge to Government*

But the crash may not be long in coming. Frankly I do not like the look of the situation the main features of which are an unstatesmanlike challenge to Government with nothing to back it except a ridiculous threat to leave the Council. As for myself, I think my plea for Responsive Co-operation, which really means only strenuously working the reforms for what they are worth to get more reforms, brings practical politics in India once more to its rock-bottom foundations, after the experiment of Non-co-operation, which, though it was fruitful in its by-products, failed for obvious reasons to achieve its main purpose. Mr. Gandhi may well nurse, in his solitude at Sabarmati, the idea of reviving the boycott of Councils after the long rope, given to Pandit Nehru, as some call it has done its work, or the toy of the Councils, given to the spoilt child of the Swarajya Party, as others call it, had lost its charms. But miracles of a sort are done only once even in the life-time of a saint. I have faith in individual or group Civil Disobedience when, on particular occasions or in particular localities, it becomes inevitable, if honour is to be vindicated. But these things are spontaneous and emerge without preparation; and the idea of them need not interfere with the working of the reforms at any time. I do not want the better to prove the enemy of the good.

*Immediate Prospects of Responsive Co-operation*  
*Possibility of forming a New Party.*

The immediate prospects of Responsive Co-operation are, as they must be, hopeful only to a limited extent; but

every one, with whom I had an opportunity of discussing it, seems to grant at least this that, my position is reasonable and logical though not very catching.

I am thinking of carrying on a propaganda of my view even in other provinces in order to materialise on paper this assurance. This may eventually lead to the formation of a new party, but I have put one limitation upon myself, viz., that I cannot be a member of any party of non-Congressmen.

As for the action, which it may be advisable for the other Swarajist members of my views in the Assembly and the provincial councils to take, the matter will soon be decided at a special meeting to be convened for the purpose, when the future course of the bye-elections and the general elections will also be considered.

*Programme of the Congress Democratic Party*

The cut and dried programme of the Congress Democratic Party of 1920 is still there, having received practically no trial so far. That may come handy to us in the Maharashtra, along with our Home Rule League or the Swarajya Sangh, which is in a state of suspended animation.

In any case, the knees of the Gods are broad enough to bear the burden of the fate of my programme as also so many other programmes which are now in the field. "

(10-1-1920)

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## Unity Conferences in Bombay

Politics in India has greatly suffered by the formation of quite a number of political parties and accentuation of the very small differences which distinguish their

policies and principles from one another. It is eminently desirable, therefore, that the avenues of public opinion should be explored in order to find out whether it is not possible even under the present conditions, to minimise these differences, to organise a large party out of the different groups, and to present a sort of a united front to Government.

An attempt was made in this direction at Cawnpore, through an amendment moved on behalf of Responsivists to the principal resolution of the Cawnpore Congress. The amendment sought only to eliminate the pointed and peremptory exclusion of taking of office in Provincial Legislative Councils and Provincial Governments, which was proposed to be inserted in the resolution moved by Pandit Motilal Nehru, and intended to give guidance to the elected members in the Legislatures during the remaining period of the current term of their office and to the Provincial Congress Committees with a view to win the coming elections in the name of the Congress. If that amendment had been accepted, a working unity would have been established at least between the two wings of the Congress, and they could have faced the coming elections on the basis of only two sets of rival candidates. It would not be possible to make any anticipatory cock-sure prediction as to whether a ministry would be formed in any particular province; but it would be light to assume that the groups of elected members in the different Provincial Councils would sit together at the proper time, deliberate upon the possibility of Government yielding or not yielding to agree to conditions which alone might make acceptance of office possible or self-respectful, and whether a working majority could be secured in the Councils to enforce the right kind of administration at the hands of would-be ministers. But the

Congress having rejected that amendment and carried the resolution of Pandit Motilal Nehru, which, as I have already stated, contains a pointed and peremptory exclusion of the idea of taking office, it becomes impossible for people, howsoever inclined towards unity, not to demur to that resolution and to develop their own organisations for putting their point of view before the country on the eve of the coming elections. The Party of Responsive Co-operation has since then been formally inaugurated. Even after the formation of the R. C. Party, Dr. Moonje, a prominent leader of the Party, suggested a compromise amendment to the exodus resolution at the A. I. C. C. meeting at Delhi. He suggested that the Congress should agree to adopt the policy of Responsive Co-operation if it did not secure a clear majority, after the elections, at least in four major provinces. This amendment was, however, ruled out of order.

There are enormous difficulties, in my opinion, in the way of forming a real All-India Party out of the different groups of parties that are already in existence, though apparently the *disapproval of the Congress resolution* is a factor common to all of them. These difficulties were realised in the life-career of the Swarajya Party which could be formed and worked as an All-India Party under certain peculiar conditions into which it is needless to enter here. I am one of those who hold that the Congress should not proceed to work as a party machine with a rigid and hide-bound policy, programme or conditions in the matter of elections, or details of policy to be pursued thereafter. And if the Congress persists in its present policy, that body also will soon come face to face with the difficulties which had been experienced by the Swarajya Party. But even apart from these difficulties, it is proper in itself that every province should have the liberty to

solve the problem itself as best as it can. In the Assembly, there is of course no question of taking office or forming a ministry. The problem arises only in the Provincial Councils; but a moment's reflection would show that the possibility of successful formation of ministry depends upon so many and various factors that you could never tell in a cock-sure way, before the elections, whether a ministry could be or ought to be formed in a particular province. The colour of the elected members of each Provincial Council as a whole will go a great way in determining this issue. Face to face with administration by a ministry the elected members are likely to be influenced more by the practical problems of administration before them than by the high or general politics in the country. It is possible that Responsivists and others may combine for a common purpose or it may not be possible; but in any case it would be too much for the Executive body or the Cabinet of an All-India Central Party to regulate for ever the conduct of all groups of elected members, by edicts containing an enunciation of general principles or even *ad hoc* mandates issued to meet particular requirements. I would, therefore, content myself with the formation of a party of loose affiliation, with the fullest liberty to provincial leaders and groups of elected members to exercise their judgment and to do what they think best under their own conditions. If co-operation with or opposition to Government is to be discriminate, then it follows that the necessary discrimination could be properly exercised only by those who occupy vital points of contact with practical problems coming before the Provincial Councils.

If set mandates and rigid discipline enforced by a central Cabinet outside the Councils be not desirable in the case of the actual work of the Provincial Councils,



it is still more undesirable in the matter of putting forward candidates as Party candidates. Election has become such a costly and difficult business that those only can think of standing as candidates, who have got certain personal requisites which no party can supply. These requisites are amplitude of funds, or influence or personal merit. No amount of mere party organisation can supply these, where individual candidates cannot command them. Nor, on the other hand, can mere party organisation completely demolish these, if the rival candidates put up by another party happen to possess them. I think, therefore, that an All-India Party, if one is formed out of the labours of this Conference, should content itself with recognising as its candidates whoever agree to fight the elections, putting in the forefront of their manifesto, a pledge to follow the policy of Responsive Co-operation or discriminating co-operation and opposition, in the event of their election to the Council. That would be a large enough basis for candidates, with varying colours in other matters, to go to the voters and each should then seek his own fortune. Some people seem to think that only under a strict party discipline can the effort and the influence of the Party be concentrated upon a single candidate. But with due deference to the experience of others, I submit that it is too much to ask a central Cabinet to choose the best candidate from among the number of people who apply for recognition of the Party. On the other hand, what the disciplinary action of a party cannot do may be achieved by trust in individual candidates, who, in many cases, are sensible enough to know their own limitations and also patriotic enough to make room for others, in the best interests of the Party and the country. I have already alluded to the cost of election, which is a great deterrent though not necessarily a decisive factor.

I would, therefore, frankly suggest that in investigating the possibility of an All-India Party, under the present conditions, an attempt should be made to minimise the essential points of contact rather than to lay out a wide and comprehensive platform. To give a concrete instance I would regard or own or claim everyone to be a member of the new Party, (1) who may be prepared to work the present Reforms, though inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing, to get the best out of them with a view to advance the political welfare of the people, and to accelerate the country's progress towards Swarajya and to oppose the Government wherever necessary for that end; (2) who agrees to the ideas of acceptance of office as part of the programme of working the Reforms, that is to say, who does not, as the Congress resolution does, positively exclude the idea of acceptance of office, but would be prepared to allow it to be taken or not taken according to the circumstances of each Province.

There is one more thing I would like to mention. It is that just as the Congress has made the mistake of an anticipatory exclusion of office, the new Party also would be making a mistake if it postulates an anticipatory exclusion of direct action in any of its forms and under any conditions or circumstances. Frankly speaking, I am one of those who think that practical politics in India cannot advance appreciably, unless people can advert, howsoever distantly, to some kind of sanction which sometimes is afforded in each case by some kind of direct action. I would, therefore, suggest that the enunciation of the principles of the new Party should steer clear of the *exclusion* of direct action. The Party would simply have no right to say it. I do not expect the new Party to successfully govern the conduct of elected members of councils by mandates dispensed at the hands of a central Cabinet;

and still less do I expect that special action, to suit special emergencies in the Provinces, can be successfully governed or enforced by mandates of that kind. All direct action must, in my opinion, be spontaneous, whether it is defiant or retaliatory or resentful in spirit or takes the shape of Disobedience of Laws or Non-payment of Taxes or Obstruction to Government in other conceivable ways. On this point, therefore, I would suggest that, if mention must be made of the methods that may be adopted by the approval of the Party, while opposition and even obstruction should be mentioned as specifically included, there should be no specific or categorical exclusion of direct action. Silence on this latter point may suit the needs of the case, though personally, I would say that it would be better to put the thing in the form in which it has been done in the Manifesto drawn up and passed by the Akola Conference.

In short, my definite proposal is that Responsive Co-operation or discriminate co-operation *cum* opposition and obstruction should be the only integral part of the creed of the new Party. And as for the elections, the Party should be prepared to count amongst its gains whoever wins the elections, having of course given a prominent place to the policy of Responsive Co-operation in his election-manifesto.

As to the conditions of the membership of the new Party, I think it would be a manifest advantage if people could be persuaded to become members of the National Congress along with being members of the new Party. But on that point, I would rather accept the decision of the Akola Conference, which does not insist upon the membership of the Congress as a condition of the membership of the Responsive Co-operation Party in all Provinces. As I myself said at the Conference, if we find that we succeed in enlisting a large number of members of the new

Party first on a non-Congress-membership basis, there would be time enough to consider whether a further move should not be made to persuade the members of the party already so enlisted also to become members of the Congress.

In conclusion, I would like to state my position clearly as follows :—

- (1) I entirely sympathise with the objects of these Conferences.
- (2) I earnestly wish that a united Indian Nationalist Party should be formed as indicated in the joint invitation issued for the Bombay Conference.
- (3) If a party like this is formed, I shall certainly become a member of it, provided most of the points suggested by me in this statement, and which I regard to be essential for my joining the Party, are accepted by the Conference.
- (4) Further, I wish to make it clear that, while being a member of the new Party, I shall reserve to myself the right to remain a member of the organisation formed at Akola, to carry on propaganda work, so far as I am concerned, also through our old Home Rule League or Tilak Swarajya Sangh, and also reserve to myself full freedom in the matter of contesting the coming elections, on behalf of the Responsive Co-operation Party, in such manner as may be determined by the election committee of the Party.

(23-3-1926)

## Talk of Unity Again !

### *Mr. N. C. Kelkar's Views*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar, interviewed by an A. P. representative, observed as follows:—

Hurried negotiations made over the telephone between Simla and Bombay, and communicated to Poona, Yeotmal and Nagpur, are extremely puzzling and inconvenient. Personally I feel that myself and my party are being hustled in an unfair manner, to make up our mind and give a decisive reply at such a short notice and without knowledge of full details, especially when it is not known whether Pandit Motilal Nehru on the other side has unequivocally agreed to accept the proposals made by Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. A new independent Congress Party would conceivably do some good in Upper India and other parts of the country, where the Swarajya Party has been disbanded or disintegrated, and the Responsive Co-operation Party has not been regularly formed. For such a party upsets no existing organisation, and supplies a convenient platform for a new party formation and joint action. But I do not see the fun of the Responsive Co-operation Party, which has already been definitely formed, strongly consolidated in the three provinces of Maharashtra, and also recently established in Bengal, Assam and other parts, being asked to wind itself up. And all this bother only for satisfying the fastidious taste of certain people, who now perhaps realise that they did wrong in not befriending the Responsive Co-operation Party at a time when it needed all the help of those who were dissatisfied with the Cawnpore Congress resolution and the stunts of the Swarajya Party. In the provinces of Maharashtra, at any rate, preparations for contesting the elections on the party ticket have too far advanced to allow

any interference with them, and I for one would rather withdraw from these elections in disgust than dissolve the present party or merge itself into another organisation, however more attractive in name, and go to the polls with new colours.

The evil of party shuffling has been sufficient unto the day, and I don't see why we should not be allowed to go on peacefully with things as they are. It is always fatal to change horses in the mid-stream; and so far as the three provinces of Maharashtra are concerned our fortunes are not likely to be any better simply because the R. C. P. gives up its name and title. If a new party is to be formed with the word Congress somehow shoved into it, there is time enough to do it after the elections and before the session of the Assam Congress. It would be something indeed if, as the result of these negotiations and the acceptance of the Sabarmati Pact by all sides, the Congress were, as now suggested by some die-hard Non-co-operators, to withdraw entirely from this business and to call off all the Swarajya Party candidates and leave the field entirely to the R. C. Party or rather the Independent Congress Party. But the proposal of a mixed committee to select candidates is absolutely inconvenient at this late hour, and I see in this inconvenient proposal the hand of one or more intriguers who find that the Congress and the Swarajya Party are fast losing ground in the prospects of success at the election. I am, therefore, definitely against, not the formation of an independent party by Lalaji and Panditji if they like it, but against the R. C. Party disbanding and merging itself in the new party at this moment. I stick, however, firmly to the Sabarmati Pact and if the A. I. C. C. accepts it and upholds it I am bound to abide by it.

## Mr. Kelkar on A. I. C. C., Bombay

Interviewed by a representative of the *Bombay Chronicle* just after the All-India Congress Committee session, Mr. N. C. Kelkar said:

"The business of the All-India Congress Committee was unnecessarily prolonged. It would not have gone over four days. The action of the President in taking up the censure motion at 11 o'clock on the last day and hustling people over it was naturally regarded as a tactical blunder. I believe the Madras Congress Party would have been well advised in putting up a stand-up fight against the vote of censure because they had very good advocacy on their side, if not a very good case. At any rate it might have looked more graceful and more manly to have allowed a proper measure of time for the discussion of that motion. The amendment ultimately accepted has not in my opinion mended matters. Now it is, as it were, a *rule nisi* issued against the Madras Congress Party, and the President was candid enough to admit certain facts as admissions and certain others as allegations worth looking into. He has also openly undertaken to put the Madras Congress Party upon its proper behaviour in future which practically means an admission of guilt. I should have personally preferred a fight on this issue all along the line, though the vote might have been passed. The President's speech savoured of a guilty conscience.

### *Political Unity Let Down*

"Greatest credit is, however, due to Mr. Shrinivas Iyengar for securing the resolution on Hindu-Moslem unity at the hands of the All-India Congress Committee. There he showed great capacity for persuasion and earnestness of appeal and sincerity of devotion to a good cause.

In the matter of the other unity he obviously failed, but this was not his fault. I lay the failure entirely at the door of Pandit Motilal Nehru, but for whom unity might certainly have been achieved in this meeting. It looked as if Panditji wanted to score off against the alleged breaking down of the Sabarmati Pact at the hands of Mr. Shrinivas Iyengar. But between the two mistakes, however, one committed in 1926 and another in 1927, the cause of unity has been cruelly let down.

"As for Maharashtra, it might have liked best a new formula of unity accepted by all parties. Next best would have been the adoption by the A. I. C. C. of at least one part of Mr. Annapurnaih's (a member from Andhra) resolution which was certainly in order and would have, I am sure, been carried. The President might have been more correct and even successful in that from the point of view of unity, which he is sincerely attempting. The Maharashtra leaders most willingly withdrew, at the President's request, their proposals because they thought that such withdrawal might yet facilitate the good work of persuasion which the President is carrying on in all directions. Moreover, though the Maharashtra proposals have not been formally put on record, facts in every province now practically vindicate their attitude, and that Maharashtra considers as even a better triumph of their cause than a formal adoption of their proposals by the A. I. C. C. As between the Congress parties and the Responsivists, the latter have, I have found, made themselves somehow more acceptable even to No-changers by their straight-forward policy.

"It has always been the fate of Maharashtra to have the finger of scorn and derision and sometimes even of anger pointed out at it for its rebellious policy. But open rebellion is far better than clandestine manoeuvring and



dubiousness of purpose, weakness of conviction and last but not least hypocrisy which is not even skilfully covered.

*One Great Achievement*

"In short, the resolution on Hindu-Muslim unity is the one great achievement of the present All-India Congress Committee. I do not think Pandit Motilal Nehru made any great contribution to that, nor was his contribution necessary because his views on this matter have not even counted for anything. But he egregiously failed in the one matter in which he might have helped, namely, political unity; and even supposing he, later on, unwillingly or tardily agrees to any unity formula, that contribution could not be appreciated, because unity really wanted a helping hand while it was sinking in political waters and the helping hand given to it, when it is on "terra firma" by its own strength and efforts, would be a hindrance, not a help."

(22-5-1927)

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**Cawnpore Music Conference**

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar's Presidential Address*

Prof. Paluskar, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you sincerely for the honour you have done me by asking me to preside over this, the 8th session of the Music Conference, being held under the auspices of the Gandharva Maha-Vidyalaya. But I cannot accept the office under any false colours. Let me tell you, I am not an expert either in the science or art of Music, nor even a successful dilettante. I, however, yield to none in my appreciation of the beauty and also the utility of Music. I am one of those who can honestly confess that they listen with rapture to any melodious performance of the Musical art and shall be prepared to yield our attention and allegiance to music in preference to many other

things, either in public or private life. As a fine art Music is one of the best gifts of the Gods, and it is not mankind alone that is privileged to share its delights and benefits. The heavenly spheres rotate and revolve to their own music, and I can believe the poetic story that when Orpheus played on his lyre the wildest-passioned brutes and insects lost their vicious nature and were entranced into perfect harmony with the divinely spiritual Sages.

But even in our human experience, do we not realise that while music redeems and alleviates our sorrow and distress, it sweetens our joys and enlivens our sense of festivity? The king, rolling in the wealth and splendour of his court, feels that he lacks something when he has no musician at command to sing or play to him. And what else so successfully serves to drive away the tedium of the drudge and labourer in his tiresome toil? Music is a pleasure which can be enjoyed equally either by oneself alone or in company. It intensifies the devotional fervour of the lonely ascetic when he wants to be in tune with the infinite; and on the other hand it gives, as it were, incarnation to the figure of social consciousness when a great gathering sings a full-throated chorus. While it lends a graceful embellishment to literature it can deepen the gravity of philosophy. To the Scientist it is an inexhaustible mine of gold, and it is quite current coin in the hands of the common man. Though by its mannerisms, Music keeps its individuality in relation to nations, it has a well-recognised body of principles which are accepted without demur as truly international. Such, in brief, is music, and I can imagine no soul without a taste for it or gratitude towards it.

Prof. Vishnu Digambar has been fortunate enough to be able to give his whole life to the pursuit of the science and art of Music and I can really congratulate him as

much upon the proficiency he has attained in it, as upon the single-minded effort he has made to organise the study and popularisation of music. Even when he and I were school-fellows he had marked himself out as an excellent singer, who afforded a prominent attraction to the Hari-kirtans performed by his uncle. He was naturally weaned away from his school-studies at an early age; and for a long time after I lost all trace of him until one day I was told, by an impressionable observer, fanciful stories of how he had recently seen a beautiful young singer dressed in the exuberance of colours and majesty of attire, travelling in Upper India in a first-class railway compartment, with a number of beautiful *chelas* attending on him and surrounded by quite a wealth of musical instruments. But the real point of curiosity was added to this description by the statement that he was, of all persons, a Maharashtrian. My curiosity, however, remained to be gratified till, some time after, I stood face to face with him and identified him as a whilom school-fellow—the self-same young singer who had roused my envy in my childhood and, I may confess, does so even now. I have followed his fortunes and vicissitudes since he left the Punjab and established himself in the Bombay Presidency; and I must say that, though fate has not been uniformly propitious to him, he has done more than any other musician to establish an Academy of Indian Music and secure the continuity and ramification of schools of music. He has now transcended his professional career and developed a kind of asceticism which is in harmony with the devotional use to which he has been putting his Musical art in singing the poetry of Ramayana, and he has thus, to my mind, found a natural vehicle for the combination of the tendencies of the sweet and the spiritual interests in him.

I will now pass on from the individual to the cause he represents in this Conference. As I have said, this is the 8th Music Conference that is being held by his efforts, and I am here not to pose as a man of music but to testify to my appreciation of these efforts. The time he has chosen for the Conference, while it is convenient from one point of view, is inconvenient from another. For, although the National Congress attracts to its venue people from all parts of India, it puts, and very excusably, subsidiary activities to such insignificance that the best attention of even those who attend the Conference cannot be devoted to its work. But even hurried conferences like this have their own use, and I hope Panditji's efforts in holding the present Conference will not go in vain. For, though politics, under the present conditions of the country, naturally secures a practical monopoly of public attention, the revival and the nationalisation of Indian Music must also be attended to for the aid it is calculated to give to put new life into this really dead body of the Indian Music. The present is an epoch of revival and renaissance; and that movement cannot succeed in its mission unless it embraces and establishes points of vital contact with the manifold activities through which an awakening nation generally manifests itself. That our national gatherings begin and end with songs of music is certainly not an empty formality. The *Vandemataram* song, if it is so exquisitely sung as I had heard it to-day, is bound to create an atmosphere of peaceful emotion so necessary for the success of any national gathering. I have seen in England songs of freedom sung by the whole house of a Labour audience so lustily and harmoniously that, one would like to go miles to hear them and feel content with just having heard them, even if one could not hear any other speeches in the programme.

But of course the renaissance of Indian Music is a thing to be advocated quite apart from its political uses. It is one of the assets which we may rely upon and can prove serviceable in establishing the claim of India to ancient civilisation, and western singers who have paid attention to research in the science of Indian Music have received, I am told, the same favourable impression as others have done by their research into the Vedas and other religious literature. Paradoxical as it may seem, the west has come to our aid in learning to appreciate the ancient glory of this Indian science and art, the national spirit has put a spur to our effort in this direction also, by creating in us a lively desire to revive and resuscitate Indian Music at the end of its varied vicissitudes. In a recent epoch we found Indian Music in two contradictory conditions. At one end the science was in the hands of masters who, though proficient themselves, had lost the power of creation, but were content to continue the traditions of particular and isolated schools of musical learning in the cloistered preserve of pride and vanity, hedged round with fitfulness and even vice in some cases. At the other end, the art had gone down into the hands of courtezans and *tanasqurs* who had learnt to pander to a lower taste and rendered it almost impossible for the respectable middle class to keep or avow association with the art, because of the obvious levity and the vulgar purpose of musical compositions in which its body and soul were encompassed.

The tragedy of the loss of self-rule in any country is exhibited by the complete separation of high culture from its practical uses. But renaissance is marked also in every nation by the successful effort to bring the two together on a broad social level. It minimises the distance between the master and the man in the musical as

well as in the economic domain, and it establishes centres of cultural art from which radiate the rays of knowledge and pleasure which, like electricity, while they can serve in the hands of genius as power for creation of richness and wealth, can also serve the lighter purpose of genial warmth and mild illumination for the average man of intellect and means. The spirit of renaissance, though it is roused by contact with foreign civilisation, also at a later stage creates a desire to purge the native art from the crust of foreign influence which is laid thick on it by the development of an outlandish taste and attraction of handy instruments and implements. The student of the Indian art of Music is, I think, just now face to face with this dual problem in which renaissance manifests itself. For, while on the one hand he yearns for the resuscitation of the best elements of the ancient Indian musical culture by patient research and intensive study, he also has to vindicate its native quality against its foreign rival and to discourage and depreciate the use of such accompaniments of the art as the cheap harmonium. And this task he has got to fulfil under conditions which again painfully remind the loss of political power. For the musical art has greatly suffered from the discontinuance of the plentiful patronage it formerly received at the hands of Indian Princes and Chiefs, who took pride in counting masters of Music as an item of their kingly glory and whose pride it was to keep the musical profession not only alive but lustrous. In the later days these rich patrons of the art have become rare and the art has, therefore, to rely even for its vital nourishment upon the poor middle-class. But democracy has always given good account of itself when so put on its metal, and once more the students and the professors of Music have begun to hope for a prosperous and self-reliant life. I think I am not far wrong if I state

that the average gains of a good dramatic singer or a professional songstress at this day compare favourably with those of professors of Colleges and Universities; and professional songstresses sometimes earn for one performance what a High Court Judge cannot earn by one month's labour. The average musical teacher in towns and cities earns as much as an average graduate, and there I leave the consideration of the material aspect of the renaissance of the Indian Musical art.

But I feel concerned more with the *renaissance* of Indian Music as an art and in this respect the reforming spirit can render much valuable service if it applies itself in a critical as well as practical spirit to its consideration. Broadly speaking, the points for reformation as they occur to me are these:—

(1) The art, especially its practice, has formed itself into exclusive grooves in which it has in some places completely died out or is in a state of atrophy. No school of Music can ever be really so self-sufficient as to exclude the possibility of improvement and embellishment by a sympathetic appreciation and critical absorption of the best elements in parallel schools of Music. As a loose maxim in this connection I would recommend the formula of valid marriage in Hindu Law, "outside the family, but within the caste"; and perhaps also to show you, that I take stock of the latest conditions of social life also in India. I would say that I could not put an absolute ban upon union with the better elements even in foreign art, if it could be secured under conditions likely to render the union a happy one.

(2) Speaking for Maharashtra, while preserving the best elements of the Mohammedan and the Hindusthani art, and also while recommending a greater appropriation of the beauties of South Indian Music than has been done

hitherto, I shall have no hesitation in saying that the masters of Music in Maharashtra should assert themselves more vigorously in discovering the Maharashtra genius even in this domain. The suggestion is made in no spirit of provincial pride, but only in appreciation of the eternal truth in such matters as well as the imperative needs of the case. How often have I not felt sadness of spirit when I see Maharashtra musicians, and even the best of them, trying to avow their lineal descent through generations of non-Maharashtrian preceptors, and what is worse, in pitifully mouthing unmeaning words and incorrect phraseology of Hindusthani songs? What is said about political diplomacy I am amused to find true in the domain of Music also viz. that, language is made to conceal rather than express human thoughts. The respect that we feel for the masters of song fails to save them from a secret sense of ridicule, when, like Brahmans chanting the Vedas, they reproduce, like a human machine, sounds which convey no mission to the brain. And even in cases where the meaning is understood, it only gives glimpses into a theme which loses its beauty by tedious repetition. The Khyals and Thumeris as a rule are based on the eternal theme of love between Krishna and Radha, or some mischievous, ungentlemanly or unchivalrous character of Krishna towards Gopis, or the pitiful prayers and protests of a love-lorn woman to her lover which discloses abjectness of spirit or strength, or candid reproach, both of which militate against the idea of feminine grace. My earnest advice, therefore, to the Indian masters of music is to simply change the phraseology of the songs they sing and thus to completely vernacularise them for the benefit of the public. With the rising generation of talented poets and musicians at their service this is, to my mind, quite an easy task and I lay stress on the reform, because the



Marathi phraseology with its easy import of meaning and the national association of words with musical sounds would supply the rock-bottom foundation for the super-structure of the Maharashtra school of Indian Music.

(3) *The same reform would also bring the higher musical culture within easy means of the common people, for a man generally likes to hum and sing songs whose meaning he understands. This is proved to my mind by the fact that the widening range of the use of scientific musical tunes, recently brought under requisition by Marathi dramatists in their operas has distinctly resulted in a thicker acquaintance of the average play-goer with the higher art, so far of course as amateurish knowledge and memory could help it.*

The attention of musical composers must also be directed towards a large supply of ballads and household songs, and songs for the special education of the young boys and girls in our schools, and lastly, also for the lower class people. Each of these songs is a distinct variety, but the one common thread that may run through and connect all these in the nexus of a national spirit, a higher, if not an absolutely pure, taste and a meaning and a purpose appropriate and attractive to the particular class intended to be served by those songs. The heroic age is certainly passed in India, the age, I mean, which could inspire ballads. But there is no age without its inspiring and towering personalities; and it would be a proper use of the graces of the musical art to give a vocal shape and form to their virtues and achievements. The rising tide of nationalism affords an ample field of songs of liberty and freedom or songs pervaded by a higher and yet a practical emotion. A beginning in this direction is seen to be already made; and I will only voice a hope for its extension. As for songs serving the taste of the lower

-class, even here the lighter vein can suggest an appropriate vehicle for thoughts which bear upon the common life of the society abounding, as it does, in a variety of themes relating to the weal and woe, the fate and fortune and the vices and whims of human types.

The great Marathi poets of old made efforts to liberalise sacred learning and to make it available to the common man by the use of the vernacular *i. e.* the current spoken language. Our poets of this day have an equally important task before them; for they owe it to themselves and to their generation that, they should use their poetic talent for bringing up-to-date culture to the door of the common man. I disclaim that the present age is either hopelessly atheistic or godless, and poets may be found who could usefully devote their attention to the composing of spiritual songs which may give solace to their religiously-minded brethren. There is hardly any musical literature worth the name, for the cradle, the nursery, and the lively young boy and girl in his age of innocence. The old folk-lore is either forgotten or despised and no substitute is yet put forth; and this want also must be supplied. But in all these matters the poet can achieve very little without the aid of the Master-Musician. The Goddess Saraswati is to us the patron saint of both Literature and Music; and her devotees must make it a common cause, if they would benefit the society by a full requisition upon her capacity for blessings. The mere words of a song without its Music are like the mere warp and woof of a woolen or silken texture without the wool thereon. The dead bones of versified composition have a kind of double soul, one the sense and purpose and the other its inherent Music. And unless both these go together in the fullest harmony and friendship, the effort is a waste. I would therefore, request Marathi poets, and musicians and

singers to come closer together and achieve this national purpose.

It is, of course necessary to make Music part of education in all its stages. But for those who have left schools and academies the public can and must do what Government must do for the other, by financially helping and patronising private schools of Music. In this matter Pandit Vishnu Digambar has shown the way, and I can only wish that the other professors of Music follow his foot-steps and disclose the spirit of organisation which he has shown. On this last subject there is much that can be usefully said; but I have already exceeded the limits of an address of a hurried Conference like this and would, therefore, conclude with repeating my thanks to my friend the Panditji for giving me this opportunity to express the friendliness of a politician to the art of Music. It is given to many to appreciate the pleasures of art, though expert knowledge falls to the share of only a few. There should, therefore, be nothing presumptuous in the tribute which I have sought to pay to music by this presidential address. For, in this case, loyalty is a pleasure, though devotion may be a privilege.

(December 1925)

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## All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Cawnpore (1925)

### *Presidential Address*

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me thank you for the honour you have done me by electing me to preside over this gathering. I value this honour less for the honour itself than for the opportunity it gives me for explaining my position with regard to the communal contest or controversy in which for the

moment all of us seem to be involved willingly or unwillingly. I believe I am one of those who are the least affected by what is really a communal spirit. To me political life and progress in the country is of infinitely greater importance than the progress or set-back of any single community in this country and I can, if necessary, prove that my favourite motto has been the question asked by the Irish Poet in the following words :—

Shall I ask the brave soldier  
                   who fights by my side  
 In the cause of my country  
                   if our creeds agree ?  
 Shall I give up the friend  
                   I have valued and tried  
 If he kneels not before  
                   the same altar with me ?

In saying this I am perhaps making a large order upon the credulity of those who believe that I am steeped over head and ears in the mire of a bad communal spirit. But whatever others may think of me I owe it to myself to make my own position clear as far as I can.

I have said that, left to myself I would give the complete go-bye to any communal movement in the country. But I find it impossible to ignore the hard realities of the situation. Strange as it may seem, the prospect of political advance though neither very concrete nor substantial, has produced a reactionary effect upon the communal tendencies of the people in this country. And what is stranger still, in my opinion, is that the advance of education has, instead of ameliorating the bitterness of communal strife, apparently served only to furnish more abiding reasons for the continuance of its intensity than the unaided religious sentiment of the followers of the different religions in India. Is it not really a paradox that, while

the rage of superstition and bigotry in the uneducated Indian flares up only for a moment but dies the next moment and enables him to go on with his usual routine of life, as if nothing untoward had happened, the educated man, with all his intellectual development and critical spirit should give a deeper place near his heart to communal feeling and to think out abiding reasons which only help to keep up the fatal flare? The proportional growth of communal feeling in India side by side with the progress of education and political sentiment looks indeed like a problem for a psychological investigator. But I think the problem is not insoluble or even hopelessly difficult. To any acute thinker the problem gives no surprise; for the rousing of sectional instincts is a necessary preliminary stage through which every national movement has to pass in its early career. To my mind the communal reaction only accentuates the fact of the development of political instinct. It is probably because political rights and privileges have begun to loom large before the mind of even the common man in India that he has begun to take greater care of his religious and communal denomination. He finds in this denomination a much wider plane for the adjustment of his relations with other communities. Without meaning profanation or offence to any religiously minded man, I would say that the real beneficiary of his present much advertised religious movement is not his soul *vis-a-vis* salvation in the other world, but his desire to have more and better goods appertaining to this very wordly life. For squaring up matters with his Maker any religionist can achieve the end by secret contemplation. But it is necessary to beat the big drum and to organize a parade of communal consciousness, if we want to square up matters with those who are our competitors in the loaves and fishes which this world can afford.

In this manner only can I hope to account for the fact that the present political state of the country should seem to be overshadowed by communal squabbles and increasing communal bitterness. In saying this I may appear to be too cynical to some people. But I would make it clear that what I have said covers only one and the immediate aspect of the revival of communalism in this country. I am otherwise a believer in the possibility of religious missionaries who are absolutely disinterested in a worldly way in a communal strife and who honestly regard it a sacred duty to preach the truths of their own religion to people outside the pale of those religions. Glimpses of this genuine missionary spirit have been afforded to the student of history in the early struggles of the Christians under the pagan Roman rulers, and the enterprise of Buddhistic Missionaries who went all the way to Indo-China on one side and to Ceylon on the other to preach Buddhism. Then again, when a Hindu Missionary like Swami Vivekanand went to America and there unfolded the glory of the Indian Adwaita philosophy he certainly did it without any political bias or without a desire to secure greater worldly goods to India in any conceivable manner. The struggle of the Sikhs under the Mougul Emperors must also be cited as an example of a genuine fight for freedom of faith. There was no question then of the Sikhs getting or not getting a share in the political privileges and benefits at the Royal Court at Delhi or in administrative centres outside Delhi. The Puritans also when they crossed over to America in the May-Flower had no advertence necessarily to a betterment of their material prospects in the newly discovered continent, but they undertook the enterprise because they wanted to go anywhere beyond the reach of political authority meddling in religious matters. I can say, therefore, that I do not negative in any way the possibility of genuine spiritual

fervour or a pure spirit of religious propagandism in any individual or any class of individuals. But I may be pardoned if I refuse to put under that ennobling category the present revival of communalism in India and myself rate it and ask other people also to rate it at its real spiritual or political value. It could, at the most, be said that though a truly religious spirit is something quite distinct from a truly political spirit like any two colours of the rainbow, yet also like any two colours of the rainbow they are so hopelessly mixed up in the present situation, at least on the border-land, that one can hardly say where the one ends and the other begins.

To be fair in the statement of the position I must say that there are at present three communities or religions who have been participating in the sectional contest or strife. Each of them, however, is in a distinct and peculiar predicament of its own and one must dive a little below the surface to assay the real quantity and quality of the contribution of each of them. We will all first of all take the Christian community in India. This designation covers both the Indo-British, the Anglo-Indian and the Indian Christian communities. Of these the first can conveniently affect to separate their religious and political activity in this country, for the simple reason that the Indo-Britisher is indisputably the supreme political master in the country and Christian propagandism has very little of political fruit now left to be added to his table. He frankly bases the foundation, and continues to trust the maintenance of his political power on his military and industrial superiority. He can, therefore, afford to look and sometimes even actually looks, with a subtle sense of contempt upon the activities of the Christian propagandists. What boots it to him whether a few more or less Hindus are converted to his faith, if he can otherwise make him-

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self and his country industrially indispensable to the pagan or heathen in India, and secure endless markets for his goods, inviolable prestige for the man of his race and undisputed allegiance and obedience to his rule and authority by the power he already possesses? He can conveniently disclaim the propagandist missionary and the missionary also can return the compliment by often taking sides with the Indian, expressing sympathy in his political distress and avowing a righteous hope for the attainment of even self-government by him. It must not be forgotten, however, that even so the European has provided for himself separate communal representation in the higher constituted bodies. And perhaps he wants nothing more personally because he is merely a bird of passage with no deep-rooted personal interest in this country as a Christian.

As for the Anglo-Indian he is already more than adequately provided for in several Government departments and shares with the Indo-Britisher a kind of special prestige and protection even from the overwhelming Indian majority. He too, therefore, seems to be not taking any interest in communal matters from a religious point of view. But as for the Indian Christian community, it must be said to their credit that they are showing the least sectarian or propagandist spirit though placed in a peculiar position. For on the one hand, they are obviously estranged from the Hindus and the Mahomedans as Christians and on the other, they do not share either the power, the prestige or the political privileges of the European in the country. To be stronger in a numerical sense would be their natural aspiration and yet, I think, they offend the least against the other communities by seeking to make converts therefrom. Also they might have asked for special representation or communal electorates, taking



benefit of the prevailing communal madness. But they have not done this, and their spokesmen like my friends Mr. Baptista and Dr. Datta always give the first place in their hearts to a purely national sentiment, trusting absolutely to their own sterling worth, if any, to secure to them the coveted place in the Sun.

The next community contributing to this communal contest is the Mahomedans. And their contribution is, in one sense, larger than that of any other community. Like the Hindus they occupy quite a subordinate place in this country, so far as real political power and authority are concerned. But unlike the Hindus they have connections and attachments outside India and what they lack in point of inspiration from their immediate Indian surroundings they can make up by hailing and hallooing to their co-religionists in other lands, who enjoy a kind of equality with European Nations in point of international prestige or military power. It is obvious to any one, that but for this extra-territorial attachment the Mahomedans in India would not have been a great political problem. Perhaps nine-tenths of the Mahomedan population in India is made up of converts from Hinduism and they would naturally live content with their Indian setting like the native Christian community if political leaven were not introduced in the community by ever-recurring thoughts of what is being said and enacted by Mahomedan powers in other parts of the world. The position has been aggravated by the ever irresponsible propagandistic tendency of the Mahomedan religion. Their territorial conquests and religious propagandism have acted and reacted upon each other with a kind of affinity the like of which has not been seen in any other instance. They have advanced themselves into the position of the largest numerical minority in the country. And their ambition and aspira-

tion are not strictly in proportion to their numerical strength. They put forward a transcending claim to representation, and when they ask for an *effective* representation, it is coloured less by a numerical sense than a sense of political importance based not only on the fact of their having once been the rulers of India but brought into relation with the prospects, however visionary or fanciful, of ruling India once more. This idea they do not of course put in a concrete form, for it offends the legal sense so far as the present Government is concerned and offends the national sense so far as the Hindus are concerned. The fact, they think, of a coherent continuous chain from Angora to Saharanpur of Mahomedan power and influence cannot be disputed. The further prolongation of the chain is of course immediately unthinkable; but what is impossible if a man like Kemal Pasha was found to secure the freedom of Turkey from hostile European powers and when Afganistan is so near at hand and may be ready and willing to cross over to accomplish the eternal purpose of Islam and to secure a proper foundation for this future construction? The Mahomedans have already begun to advance a claim for complete separation of every political interest all along the line in the body politic of India, so that the identity of the Moslem Raj may be effectively emphasized and its integrity rapidly developed.

Then comes the Hindu community which also may be said to be contributing to the communal contests by its sanghattan and other movements; but in this matter the issues must be clearly understood. It is obvious that the Hindus as Hindus have not complicated the political situation by putting forward any communal claim to anything. The sanghattan has no directly political significance. I am cognizant, however, of the retort that the Hindus

have everything to gain and nothing to lose by general electorates and by the maintenance of the *status quo* in other matters. But there is also a counter-retort to this. In at least two provinces the Hindus are in a minority and at least in *one province and one sub-province* they are hopelessly condemned to an insignificant numerical position for ever. And yet in those provinces the Hindus did not put forward any communal claim at any time. This should go some way at least to prove the bonafides of the Hindu claim that they are more for national than for communal interests, so far as such interests can be measured in terms of electorates and representation. Next, even when they contest the Mahomedan claim to communal electorates and representation they only object to the excess in the claim or the disproportionate demand in it. Apart from their general objection to communal electorates they have never refused to submit to any rule or formula of universal application by which the Mahomedan claim may be adjusted in all the provinces of India. Strictly speaking, representation in constituted bodies must be proportional to the share of the strength of electors representing any interest. And equity requires that Mahomedans should have representation only in proportion to the number of electors they possess in any province according to any rule of universal application which Government may frame or apply. But the discussions at Delhi last year have proved that the Hindus are prepared even to go one step further and to waive even the claim to base representation on the strength of electorates and to agree to a share in representation according to population. This assumes and actually anticipates a condition of manhood suffrage, than which no more advanced or extreme theory of representation is conceivable. According to this concession Hindus would be in a minority in two provinces, and

yet the Hindus have not asked for any special protection for these minorities. The only position which the Hindus have taken and which, I think, they should never give up is that the Mahomedans cannot be allowed to claim special representation in different Provinces according to a special rule for that Province. In other words they do not object to any rule of universal application which Mahomedans may choose to abide by. But they object and will object to *ad hoc* pleas or rules, so that the Mahomedans may be enabled to say 'heads I win, tails you lose.' The application of any one universal rule would result naturally in hostages being given by both communities in different Provinces. In the Frontier Province, the Punjab, Bengal and Sindh, the Mahomedans would be in a position of advantage. On the other hand the Hindus would be in a position of advantage in other Provinces. Does this not give a kind of automatic guarantee against the illtreatment of any one community by another in any Province, assuming that the Hindu and Mahomedan communities are both animated by fellow-feeling for co-religionists ?

From the above it will be seen that the contribution by the Hindus to the communal contest from the political point of view is the least of all the communities in India. Why, then, it may be asked, the *singhattan* which is a frankly communal movement ? The answer to the question is that the movement though communal is both in point of religion and politics simply a defensive movement. It has only a negative character in that it seeks to prevent further losses to the Hindu community occurring by reason of the propagandistic activities of other religions. Hinduism has as much right to live as any other religion. One need not go into the question whether Hinduism was right or wrong in being, in the past, a passive, ex-

clusive, non-proselytizing religion. Even now the most aggressive Hindu is not found to preach among his co-religionists that Hinduism should go forth and conquer those who have never been Hindus before. Unfortunately the idea seems to be too wild or even heretical to the typical or even to the average Hindu. He has not yet been reclaimed from that spirit of exclusiveness from foreign contact which led him to think that outside India there was nothing worth taking account of and that even within India the Hindu population that already existed was, as it were, numerically too big to be effectively good for its own welfare, that numerical plenty must be a cause of the degeneration of the social and religious ideal and that to shrink in the shell was the surer way to salvation and prosperity than to come out and advance. Even *Shuddhi* he thinks to be an adventure and would hedge it round with innumerable limitations and would propound in connection with it mystifying conundrums which would befog the average Hindu and react upon the typical Hindu. Even in the matter of prevention of future conversions he would make his own conditions and would rather lose the lower classes than give them even legitimate concessions. All this shows the narrow compass within which even the protective activities of the Hindu community are being manifested, and yet there are men in this country who must accuse the Hindu of having started the cry of Hinduism in danger, and that the Hindus would be held responsible for spoiling the cause of national advance. I have always wondered that these critics have never given a straight categorical reply to the categorical question, namely, why should the Hindus not stir themselves to seek organised unity among themselves, if other religions in India are doing not only that but much more? Why should it be the responsibility of the Hindu alone to do nothing

that would have even the most distant effect of disturbing the present complacent mood of Christians and Mahomedans who have been not only furiously nibbling at the fringe of Hinduism but daringly attacking at times even its heart and core? Will somebody point out to me the least little breath of protest uttered by these wisecracks against the propagandistic activities of the Christian Missionaries and the Moslem Tablighists? Their warning against danger to national interest could be appreciated, if they were impartial in their condemnation of the disturbing communal activities of all communities alike. I really wonder why their wholesome advice should have been reserved only for the Hindu community and yet none of them, I believe, is really ignorant of the ravages that are made in the ranks of the Hindu community from day to day and, I may say, almost from hour to hour. Bishop Whitehead openly claims that the toll which Christianity levies upon Hinduism comes to two thousand souls or heads, whichever you may like to call it, every week. The real figure of conversions to Mahomedanism from week to week cannot be precisely estimated. But it must be evidently a good round figure. All possible means are being preached and practised for the benefit of Christian and Moslem aggrandizement among Hindus and it is an open secret that even the resources of Hindu States governed by Moslem Rulers are being used for this purpose. But whereas complaint is heard against the Shuddhi and Sanghattan movements of the Hindus there is hardly an audible or even formal demur to the proselytizing propaganda of the non-Hindus.

But I would ask the Hindu community no longer to concern itself with the accusations brought against them in this matter by interested critics. The Hindus ought not to lose the continuity of their effort by the red-herring

drawn across their path. They should have sense enough to see through the attempt to exploit their patriotism and national sentiment by people who have not themselves foresworn communal activity. The losses they have suffered in the past should now open their eyes to look at a future correct policy without the least blinking or hesitation. The Hindus cannot afford to lose their integrity even in the name of Swarajya. And in this respect history indicates the reasonable limits beyond which any religion or community cannot be called upon to make concessions. It is almost amusing that some people should affect to believe that Hindus have been guilty of a great crime in happening to be in a majority over other communities in Hindusthan, that is to say, their own native country. If the other communities in India are in a minority here, have they not more than a *quid pro quo* or counterbalancing set-off in other countries? Are the Hindus to blame that these others are in a minority in India? And can any one seriously say that, if other things were allowed to be equal, the present numerical proportion between the different communities would disappear or even materially change for centuries? And in that case have not the minorities in India to accept their position in a reasonable spirit, without fretting and fuming over the irremediable situation? As a Hindu I can say this, that the Hindu community in India will always be prepared to abide by any rational scheme or method of giving protection to the minorities in India, which can be devised from any working parallel in any other country where a similar position may have been or is in existence. I may mention the methods of proportional representation, preferential vote, limited vote, and second ballot etc. It is open to any one even to suggest another and a better method, if imaginable. But as a Hindu, I would refuse,

with all the insistence at my command, to be penalized or sheared like a sheep for the fault of being a numerical majority in this country. Further, I would insist upon the right being conceded to the Hindus of not only preserving intact their present numerical strength by every conceivable method, but also increasing it by the Shuddhi movement for the sake of recouping at least the immediate losses. I would go even further and say this to my Hindu brethren: "You have a right to be proud of your religion as everybody else and you have a right to aspire to spread it." There is nothing reprehensibly boastful in saying that the Hindus are the custodians, on this side, of what is called the Aryan culture and they will consider it a proper mission to give non-Hindus the benefit of it, if of course they would have it. One thing, however, I will warn my community against, and that is some of the methods by which Christian or Muslim propagandists carry on their conversions. This opens up a subject on which, for the sake of my own mental peace, I would not further dilate. But I would unhesitatingly say to my Hindu Brethren, "Let the Hindu religion or the Hindu community die rather than practise fraud or force or other notorious methods of conversions which are tinged with melancholy meanness of mind in any form." Matters of religious faith deserve, more than any other matters, to be sacred ground which ought not to be polluted by the footfall of any interests or motives of a worldly character.

In conclusion, I would point out that even those who strongly feel the need of the movement of Hindu organization, do not, in many cases, realise the difficulties which beset their path. And what is worse, many of these difficulties are of their own making. The Hindu Society, we must all remember, cannot be well organised unless it has purged itself of its own inherent impurity and injustice.



Hindu organization cannot be had merely for the asking, that is to say, expressing approval for it. Its exclusive spirit has put it within a narrow and a straight jacket and even within that jacket it has been torn to pieces by the operation of quite a number of disintegrating forces. The caste system has been pushed to a ridiculous extent and we have been taught to glory in the very meagreness of our social groups. This naturally leads to each group acting for itself and working for its own exclusive welfare. Even the depressed and untouchable classes, though themselves kept at arm's length by the upper classes, practise the same fault in their own case and behave towards each other as if they themselves were a superior caste and the rest nowhere. Another line of cleavage runs along religious sectarianism which in the fury of its internal quarrels and dissensions is completely oblivious of the common danger which threatens from without. The Dwaiti and the Adwaiti, the Shankara and the Madhva, the Arya Samajist and the Sanatanist, the Shakta and the Shaivite, must all now agree to bury their small differences and to put in the forefront the one idea that, they have all to lose in common equally, if they do not present a united front and join hands in organising the Hindu Society. They have a stake in the country greater than any other community in India. In the recent troubles the Indian Mahomedans could at least think of such a thing as *Hijrat*, though of course they could not practise it successfully. But where in the whole wide world is there an inch of space which the poor, unbefriended and threatened Hindu can call his own, outside Hindustan? Other communities have their whole bases of operations and world-wide lines of communication and flotillas of boats and transports which can replenish them in India at need. The Hindu Society, on the other hand, has long ago burnt its

boats, cut off every possible line of communication with the world with its own hands, and has cooped itself up unwisely with a ditch around itself and a foolish contrivance in which the valve shuts against itself but opens out for any hostile soldier, adventurer or camp-follower to safely come across and give the best account of the slightest capacity of mischief or harm which he may possess. The only hope, therefore, of this beleaguered community now lies in strongly fortifying itself at all points of attack, make friends with all amongst itself and take good care of the blind, the lame and the diseased and to enthuse the whole garrison with the hope that it can save itself even now, if it makes up its mind, the hope being reinforced by the warning that it is doomed to destruction if it faints or falters for a moment. Hindus not only wish to attain political Swaraj in India, but they also wish to have their proper share of it, remaining Hindus. Like the late Lokamanya Tilak at Lucknow they should of course be prepared to make all reasonable concessions to the minorities in this country, but also like Lala Lajpatrai at Bombay, they must be prepared to declare that, they will fight for Swaraj cheerfully along with Mahomedans and others, shoulder to shoulder, but will carry on the struggle by themselves and without the others if the worst comes to the worst. Swaraj will not be worth having if we cannot purchase it with any price less than the loss of Hinduism itself.

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## Jubbulpore Hindu Maha Sabha Conference, 1927

### *Presidential Address*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel grateful to you for electing me as President of the 11th Session of the Hindu Maha Sabha. You have bestowed on me a high honour and a proud privilege. It will be my ambition to deserve these marks of your favour. The Reception Committee, I learn, had adverted to the possibility of getting Mr. Vinayakrao Savarkar to preside over this Conference, and I share their regret and disappointment in the failure of their object, for I know that Mr. Savarkar, within the limits inexorably imposed upon him by Government, has been doing very valuable work in the direction of the fulfilment of some of the aims and objects which the Hindu Maha Sabha has in view.

### *(1) Preliminary*

It was a very wise thought on the part of those who first started the idea of founding the Hindu Maha Sabha. Gratitude always requires that we should pay a tribute to the memory of those distinguished workers in the cause of the Maha Sabha that have departed from this life and are no longer with us except in their spirit. Among such may be mentioned Justice Lal Chand, Lala Dwarka Das, Lala Murlidhar and Swami Shradhanand of the Punjab, Lala Baijnath, Lala Sukhbir Singh and Pt. Bishan Narayan Das of the U. P., and Justice Sharda Charan Mitra of Bengal. Again, occupying as I do the place once filled by such distinguished men as the Maharaja of Kasim Bazar, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Diwan V. P. Madhavrao, Dr. Kurtakoti, Raja Sir Rampal Singh, Pt. Din Dayal Sharma, Lala Lajpat Rai, Raja Narendra Natha and Dr. Moonje, I think it will do me good to bring to my mind

the lead and guidance given by them to the work of the Hindu Maha Sabha.

This 11th Session of the Maha Sabha is being held at a somewhat critical time in the affairs of both the Hindu community and the Indian nation. And it is my earnest prayer that wisdom as well as strength may be vouchsafed to us in a sufficient degree to pursue our deliberations in a thoughtful spirit and to arrive at correct conclusions.

(2) *The Charge of Communalism*

It is inevitable that public spirited men should be incessantly called upon to take part in a variety of activities, some of which may, to a superficial observer, appear to be mutually inconsistent or contradictory. But the man who cares to look deeper into things can easily get over this sense of contradiction. It is, of course, a difficult task to reconcile work for a particular community with work for the nation as a whole. But we of the Hindu Maha Sabha have now learnt by long experience to reconcile the two, and I am glad to find that, with the advance of time, the number is decreasing of those who would characterize whatever is sectional as necessarily antinational. Further, it is being discovered that those who affect neutrality in communal matters have really no following. They may glory in their isolation, but their physical detachment has not saved them from their betrayal of sneaking partiality towards one community or culpable indifference towards equities due to some other community. In all purely national matters, even the staunchest supporter of the Hindu Maha Sabha ought, of course, to be able to say that he is an Indian first. But strictly speaking the entire life of an individual or a community cannot possibly be filled by purely national politics. So long as a man must describe or designate himself

as a Hindu, the necessity remains for him to think about the well-being of the Hindus as a community and to concern himself with activity which will secure that well-being. When the real golden age will dawn and when the millenium will come, the present communal and religious labels will, of course, disappear. But it is neither wise nor safe for man, as he is now constituted, to behave as if he has already anticipated what may then be coming. There may be a League of Nations but the nations by themselves do not cease to exist on that account. There is no grander ideal than the brotherhood of man and the common Fatherhood of God. Theosophy only teaches a Hindu to be a better Hindu, a Mahomedan to be a better Mahomedan, and a Christian to be a better Christian. The Esperanto cannot suppress national languages. So long as all the human communities in the world have not attained that elevation of spirit in practical conduct, mere morbid affection of freedom from communalism will help neither the individual nor the community. It has been truly said that a proper regard for self is the basis of virtue and that reasonable self-love is a manifest obligation. The free thinker is not less egoistic than the man who openly confesses loyalty to a particular creed or submits to a particular religious discipline. The vaunted freedom from communalism is very often a guise for the gratification of the greatest individual selfishness. He who outwardly professes to be a friend of all communities is sometimes practically a friend of none. His toleration for others is a special plea for his own unfaithfulness of conduct or undisciplined nature. On the other hand, "a reasonable love of the community encourages a spirit of real moral value in its insistence on the need of loyalty, and a pride in all that is worthily done by fellow-brothers. By supreme fidelity to his community, his self-love encourages a higher

standard of conduct than that of individual advantage and teaches him how to attain the fullest vigour of self-help in union with others." It is said that in the theory of mathematical numbers, the zero plays a great part, because in conjunction with different integers, it solves the great problem of infinite sums. Similarly, the brotherhood of man can be achieved only if individuals first learn the discipline of membership of small communities and then of larger and larger communities in an ascending degree. In my speech as President of the special session of the Hindu Maha Sabha at Cawnpore in 1925, I had tried to explain why the Hindu community ought to organize itself without being afraid of the accusation of communalism. I do think that the Hindus ought not to lose the continuity of their effort by the red-herring of that accusation drawn across their path. In national territorial patriotism, they must, of course, never be wanting. But they should have at all times sense enough to see through the attempt to exploit their patriotism and national sentiment by people who have not themselves foresworn communal activity. The Hindus cannot afford to lose their integrity and identity even in the name of Swarajya, and I will just quote, with your permission, a few relevant lines from that speech which I hope will receive your assent and approval even in this meeting.

"They, the Hindus, have a stake in the country greater than any other community in India. In the recent troubles the Indian Mahomedans could at least think of such a thing as *Hijrat*, though of course they could not practise it successfully. But where in the whole wide world is there an inch of space which the poor unbefriended and threatened Hindu can call his own, outside Hindusthan? Other communities have their whole bases of operations

and world-wide lines of communication, and flotillas of boats and transports which can replenish them in India at need. The Hindu Society, on the other hand, has long ago burnt its boats, cut off every possible line of communication with the world with its own hands, and has cooped itself up unwisely with a ditch around itself and a foolish contrivance in which the valve shuts against itself but opens out for any hostile soldier, adventurer or camp-follower *to safely come across and give the best account of the slightest capacity of mischief or harm which he may possess.* The only hope, therefore, of this beleaguered community now lies in strongly fortifying itself at all points of attack, making friends with all amongst itself, taking good care of its blind, the lame and the diseased, and in enthusing the whole garrison with the hope that it can save itself even now, if it makes up its mind, the hope being reinforced by the warning that it is doomed to destruction if it faints or falters for a moment. Hindus not only wish to attain political Swaraj in India, but they also wish to have their proper share of it, remaining Hindus. Swaraj will not be worth having if we cannot purchase it with any price less than the loss of Hinduism itself."

(5) *The Shuddhi Movement—Reconversion*

The work of the Hindu Maha Sabha can be classed under heads, which have become popular and almost proverbial or household words, namely, Shuddhi and Sanghattan. And judging by the reports received from all quarters, it seems the work in both these directions is fortunately progressing rapidly. With regard to the Shuddhi movement, it has now touched all parts of India. But it does not appear to have been taken up so zealously else-

where as in Hindi India and the Maharashtra. One wonders what the other parts in India really think of it. I cannot believe that on theoretical grounds they can be against the Shuddhi movement. But there seem to be reasons why they are not so zealously prosecuting the movement. I think it behoves the Maha Sabha to depute its well-accredited agents to those provinces and to discuss the subject with local leaders. The Arya Samaj and the Maha Sabha have given a good account of themselves in this respect. In the Maharashtra mass reconversion was not so far thought possible. But recently in the Goa territory, it has actually taken place on a good scale, and the possibilities of the movement in that direction have become just discernable. The question of reconversion from the Indian Christian population did not so far attract attention, for what I may call to be curious reasons. One reason is that the conditions of life and the spirit of Indians converted to Christianity are found to be not the same as those of the Indians converted to Mahomedanism. The former, as a rule, are less fanatical and aggressive than the latter. The manner of conversions also differs. The Christian Missionaries are now-a-days hardly seen to enter into argument or controversy with Hindu Leaders. On the contrary, they try to take up a high ground of reasoning and comparative study which naturally leads to toleration and appreciative understanding of each other's position. The Christian Missionary generally contents himself with converting young orphans and women siezed with distress, and his method now consists mostly of giving education and relief. But different was the case with those Indians who were converted two or three centuries ago, when the Christian Missionaries were touched by the same fanatical spirit as the Mahomedans. At the northern and the southern end of the Maharashtra, the Portuguese



settlements were established in the 16-17th centuries, and the tracts of Portuguese Goa and Portuguese Bassein became scenes of wholesale conversions by methods, about which the less now said, the better. But the down-fall of the Portuguese Government in India was not long in coming and the converted population in these two areas was left without any direct access to political prosperity, though it remains under the Portuguese Government. The population in these areas was a sea-faring and agricultural population, and it sought to make its fortune in other avenues of life. But after a certain time conversions in these areas came to a stand-still, and the population already converted, or at least that portion of it which was agricultural in pursuit and stationary in its habitation, never entered into hostile relations with their old Hindu brethren. Like the Malkana Rajputs of the northern India, they retained in their life, the habits practically of Hindus, though the Christian Padre kept his influence over them through two points of contact viz. marriage and funeral ceremonies; otherwise, they retained their old Hindu castes among themselves and in some manner or another worshipped the old family Gods, not to say that they maintained their old Hindu traditions and superstitions. The spoken language of these lowly people again kept a vital point of contact with their Hindu neighbours. It was inevitable, therefore, that the enlightened and progressive life of these latter should have a reaction upon the former and the innermost promptings of the heart of the Christian converts at last found a vent in the reconversion movement which was recently commenced with some success in the Portuguese Goa territory.

Apart from the branch of the Hindu Sabha in Maharashtra, there is a Bramhacharyashram in the Satara District, founded by Shri Vinayakboia of Masur. It started its

Hindu Missionary work by spreading the literature of Ramdas among the younger generation, and what is even of greater importance, by winning them over to measures of exercise and discipline calculated to make their physique strong and energetic. Without the least ostentation or advertisement, the workers of this Ashrama carry on tours in the different parts of Maharashtra coming into contact more with the uneducated and the young educated people, rather than elderly people and political leaders who have already chosen careers and taken to definite professions. They were greatly impressed with the merits of the Shuddhi movement, to which lead was already given in Upper India. And their imagination was crowned with success, when they found that they could tap a pocket of favourable sub-consciousness or mentality among the Indian Christians. A mass reconversion movement was undertaken with the result that thousands of Gawada Hindus have, through their agency, now come back to the Hindu fold. The measures of repression that followed the movement are in themselves a testimony to its success. The virility of persecution of three centuries ago has no doubt now disappeared, and in the land of the proverbial inquisition a political republic has been established with its necessary accompaniment of freedom of religion and toleration of faith. Still the authorities in Goa, prompted by the local Christian Missionaries, did go to the length of externing the Hindu Mission workers with a warning that more rigorous measures would be taken against them, if they continued their work any further. But I think that the work so begun cannot so abruptly end. The leaven of partiality for their own old Hindu faith has leavened the heart of the Indian Christians, nor would the help be wanting to them from outside. The conditions in Bassein territory are

perhaps even more favourable than in Goa, and the success of the movement in Goa may soon lead to a movement in this other territory also. I give below the text of a representation which was recently addressed by some influential members of the Indian Legislature on this subject to His Excellency the Governor of Goa—

"It appears to us from reliable sources that a Hindu Mission is carrying on the work of peaceful and willing reconversion of Indian Christians to Hinduism, at their own request, and that this work of the Mission is being interfered with by some officers of the Portuguese Government in the Goa Territory.

"Your Excellency is probably aware that this territory was originally inhabited by a homogeneous population born and bred in and professing the Hindu faith, and that they were converted to Christianity by Christian Missionaries some 300 years ago. We do not advert to the methods by which these conversions were originally made; but it stands to reason, that under whatever conditions they might have been originally converted, they have a right to come back into the Hindu fold, if they now feel an impulse and a desire to be reclaimed to Hinduism. We believe that toleration of faith and freedom of religion are among the cardinal tenets of the Government of the Portuguese Republic, and that Your Excellency, as the Defender of the Faith of the population under the Government of the Republic, will not like that the freedom of the Hindu population in the Goa territory should be interfered with, if they want to be reconverted to the Hindu religion.

"We are informed that certain Hindu Missionaries have recently been arrested while carrying on their peaceful work of reconversion. We at this distance cannot more adequately go into the merits of either the activity

of the missionaries or the measures that, it seems, are being taken against them. But we trust that Your Excellency will put your foot down against any improper use of the Law in the Republic, if it is sought to be made against religious liberty by Christian Missionaries, or others with a view to impede and hinder the legitimate work of the Hindu Mission according to their lights.

"The present movement of reconversion is only consequential, and, therefore, a legitimate movement in the sense that, if it was right for the Christian Missionaries to convert the Hindu population to Christianity; it should also be right for these latter to seek reconversion to their original faith as a matter of conviction. We hope and trust that Your Excellency will take this representation into favourable consideration and give such protection or redress as may be due to the workers of the Hindu Mission, and as may be within Your Excellency's power as a custodian of law and order and religious liberty in the territory under Your Excellency's Government."

While on this subject of reconversion, however, I will say what I said even at Cawnpore; "that reconversion should not be done by anybody by fraudulent or forceful means." We all know that methods originally followed by Christians and Mahomedans in converting Hindus to their faith were neither legitimate nor above board. But this is a matter, in which I can honestly say: 'ये यथा मां प्रपद्येते तान्स्तथैव भजाम्यहम्।' Whatever may be the loss to Hinduism by such conversions, I do not want a single convert to be reconverted by reprehensible methods. "Matters of religious faith deserve, more than any other matters, to be sacred ground which ought not to be polluted by the foot-fall of any interests or motives of worldly character." I am prepared to go further and assent to it, if there is to be a legislation on this subject by which conversions or

reconversions both should be made subject, apart of course from the *necessary religious ceremony*, to open declaration before a Magistrate by the person to be converted or reconverted as the case may be. But at the same time I must unhesitatingly insist upon asserting on behalf of the Hindu community, its right to reconvert converts from other faiths. So long as Christian Missionaries and Mahomedans do not hold their hand and stop the work of conversion, how does it lie in anybody's mouth to say to Hindus alone "Stop this Shuddhi movement"? I know there are some pseudo-supernationalists who in the name of national politics condemn the Shuddhi movement. But I feel amused at their self-complaisance, when I find that none of them has courage and fairness enough to preach that doctrine to the Christians and Mahomedans, and that all this political righteousness is reserved for the poor Hindu alone.

(4) *The Shuddhi Movement-Conversion of non-Hindus*

I will now turn to another aspect of the Shuddhi movement. The word Shuddhi movement is understood by many people to mean a movement for only reconversion-reconversion to Hinduism of only those that were once Hindus but were subsequently converted to another faith. But I take it that the word was never intended to possess that limited or restrictive sense. It implies the admission to the Hindu fold of also those who were never originally Hindus, but seek for the first time to come into that fold. And in this respect I cannot but draw your attention to an event which recently took place at Nasik. That event is the conversion of an American maiden, Miss Nancy Miller, to Hinduism at the hands of Shri Shankaracharya, formerly Dr. Kurtkotli. There may be extraneous reasons for the world-wide advertisement which this conversion received in India, in England and in America. But the impor-

tance of that event is colossal enough by itself. This conversion has received the approval of the whole Hindu community, and I offer my respectful congratulations to Shri Shankaracharya, not only for his great imagination, but also for the strength of mind which His Holiness has shown in enunciating in a practical manner a great fundamental doctrine of Hinduism. We must appreciate his courage at a time when other spiritual authorities, bearing the same title and enjoying the same eminence, have been fighting shy of coming to close grips with realities. They seem not to know the spirit, if at all they know the letter, of the Hindu Dharma-Shastra. Wanting in self-confidence, they wistfully look for support in quarters which are dominated by an ultra-orthodox spirit. But the advisers from whom they seek guidance possess little knowledge and less responsibility. Well, the glamour of a no-change policy cannot last long in religion as well as politics. And here I would like to make a short digression into the meaning of the word Sanatan Dharma of which we Hindus call ourselves adherents. The word Sanatan, in my opinion, has two meanings or aspects. Sanatan certainly means old and time-honoured. But it also means abiding and enduring. As Professor Mc'Kenzie has said "the Hindus throughout their long history have been brought into contact with more than one alien civilisation, and their contact has not been without its results. But the results have not taken the form of a profound modification of social or moral ideals. Hinduism has always been more catholic and it has shown a wonderful capacity for assimilating ideas and practices of diverse and seemingly incompatible kinds. It has been likened to an old rumbling building, to the original fabric of which additions have constantly been, and to which further additions may be, made indefinitely. But amid all changes the main structure has stood and none

of the influences brought to bear on it in ancient time was powerful to shake its foundations." The Hindu religion is Sanatan because it is so ancient that we cannot localise or identify its beginnings. And even antiquity can, of course, lay a valid claim to respect and authority. But mere antiquity cannot save any religion, unless it also possesses enduring character derived from the essential quality of adaptability. In the first place, there is nothing in the religious texts against the admission of non-Hindus to Hinduism. The essence of Hinduism is not only religious, it is also racial. It is not a mere dogma but a democracy. The correct idea about Hinduism is not deductive, but it is inductive. It is not the religion that makes the Hindus, but it is the Hindus who make Hindu religion. It is not as if there was only one single body of revealed religious doctrine which was to govern the Hindu community to the end of time in the smallest details. Physically, the Hindu race existed before what we call the Hindu religion came into existence, and the community, which calls themselves Hindus, has a perfect right to modify its religion as it likes in course of time. For the supreme purpose of Dharma is the maintenance and well-being of the *Dharma* of the community professing it; and no community in this world can go on eternally with immutable laws and rules of conduct. In the heart of every religion, there is set a small gyroscopic machine by God in the form of the instinct of self-preservation, and it never fails to react, when it finds the body of the religion and the community losing its balance and falling headlong to destruction. I need not dwell upon what our community has suffered in past times by losing its faculty of adaptation to environment. The communal problems that occur in these days are in themselves a lesson and should also prove a warning. The community has lost a good deal of

its strength and solidarity by the wonderfully ingenious design of a trap-door which opened only against itself. But happily, wisdom is dawning upon our community; and I see in Miss Nancy Miller's conversion a destined fulfilment of the original purpose of the mission which Swami Vivekanand led to America at the Congress of Religions at Chicago more than 30 years ago.

(5) *The Movement of Sanghattan*

With regard to Sanghattan, I will at once say that the work that lies before the Hindu Maha Sabha is even more important. The work in the Shuddhi movement has its natural limits which are soon reached. But the work in the Sanghattan movement can never end. The programme in that direction covers a very vast area. And though I despair of an exhaustive treatment of the subject I shall try to mention the most important items in that programme. Sanghattan means organisation for solidarity and strength. To achieve this we must first of all begin to establish a good understanding between the different sections in which the Hindu community is at present divided. I see that in the constitution of the Hindu Maha Sabha, the 'Hindu' has been wisely described as any person professing any religion of Indian origin so as to include a Sanatanist, Arya Samajist, Jain, Sikh, Buddhist, Brahmo etc. Happily the feud between the Arya Samajist and the Sanatani is dying out, as it should. Both of them are the followers of the same Vedic religion, and each of them can really give points to the other in the expression of his own love of that religion. Jainism and Budhism are branches or off-shoots of the same original stock of the Hindu race and religion. Mahavir and Gautam Buddha were only militant reformers, but never had the religious sects, founded by them, more in common with any other religion than Hinduism. Mr.



Vincent Smith says "Both Buddhism and Jainism may be regarded as off-shoot sects of Hinduism." Prof. Rhys Davids says "Buddhism is essentially an Indian system. The Buddha himself was throughout his career, characteristically Indian. He was the greatest and wisest and best of Hindus." Professor Weber says, "Buddhism may be regarded as a reformed phase of Hindu religious and ethical activity."

As for the Lingayats, they have much more in common with Hinduism than even Jains or Buddhists. They worship the same deity *viz.* Shankar, and the ramification of their doctrine begins not at the Vedas themselves but much later at a time when the Puranas were coming into being. The Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj did nothing more than insist upon the idea of divine unity and efficacy of prayer even as contained in the Vedas and Upanishadas. The special Marriage Act of 1872, passed for the convenience of the Brahmos, originally demanded a declaration that the parties taking advantage of the Act were not Hindus. But the Brahmos themselves did not like the arrangement and they subsequently came forward to demand that the said declaration be changed. This obviously means that they were unwilling to part with the cherished name of Hindus for the mere sake of special facilities for marriage. The kinship of Sikhism to Hinduism is to be found not only in religious books, but also in the fact that while Sikhs and Hindus suffered persecution at the common hand of the Mahomedan, there was never any quarrel between the Sikhs and the Hindus as among themselves. The trouble about the Gurudwars between the Sikh reformers and the Hindu Mahants was due more to the conflict of vested interests, and with the enactment of the Gurudwar Bill even that trouble has disappeared. I fancy that the census opera-

tions of Government, owing to their elaboration of the statistical method, have done more to accentuate the centrifugal tendencies of the Hindu population than any inherent hostility or unfriendliness as between its different sections which originally went under one common denomination of the Hindus.

Then, within the body of the Hindus themselves, we must make up the quarrel as between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins. This quarrel is due more to the desire to advance worldly, secular aims than any religious inequalities. The spread of education is already levelling down the mounds of social unevenness, and for the rest the Brahmin must come forward to voluntarily renounce the special privileges which are enjoyed by him with decreasing justification every day. And last but not least is the question of the untouchables. The work of removing untouchability has already been taken up in hand by the upper classes in every province. But it must be pushed forward with still greater vigour. It must be recognised and perhaps even secured, if necessary, by legislation that there shall no longer be any distinction or preferential treatment as between touchables and untouchables in the participation of benefits accruing from the expenditure or investment of public funds. As for the disabilities of the untouchables in the matter of entering temples, I think the Brahmins should realise that the root cause of the trouble is not necessarily that the untouchable is not allowed to enter the temples in some places or inner enclosures of temples in others, but that the Brahmin claims and enjoys superior exclusive privileges in that respect. Therefore, if the only object of the Brahmin is to protect the sanctity of the inner enclosures, he can solve the problem by simply surrendering the special privileges he enjoys. My own idea is that in

every public temple, a place or limit should be fixed at some distance from the idol, up to which even the untouchable may go and beyond which even the Brahmin should not go. A recent telegram from Bombay informed us that the Social Equality League invested more than a thousand untouchables with the sacred thread and were initiated into the sacred Gayatri Mantra at the Thackersy Hall, Parel. This is all to the good. But I would like to say that a more real test of equality between the touchable and the untouchable would be found in the readiness of the touchable to allow the untouchable to enjoy equal privileges with the Brahmins, in the matter of visiting the Hindu public temples and receiving the spiritual satisfaction in the same measure and the same conditions as the Brahmin, from the *darshan* or the worship of the deity. Even from the Brahmin point of view, nothing can be more sacred than the *Yadnyopavita* or the *Gayatri*. And if these are not polluted by the touch of the untouchable, I wonder how the temple idol can be. I cannot conclude this subject of the Sanghathan, without bringing to your notice the constructive work which must be done with regard to the Hindu society, if we want it to be strong and well-organized. The removal of conflict between the different members and organs of the Hindu society and the establishment of good understanding between them is only a foundation upon which the real structural work of strengthening and organizing the Hindu society is to be done. This work extends over several departments. It has a physical, mental, ethical, and cultural side. Beginning with the young generation, I may say that our immediate duty is to start gymnasiums and play-grounds, where young boys, and under certain conditions young girls also must be taught to take daily physical exercise, and to go in for sports both of the

eastern and the western type. The Maha Sabha may instal Hanuman as a universal presiding deity over the young generation. There is in this connection much to recommend in the schemes of *Namascars* which combine the qualities and merits of both physical exercise and religious devotion. The Maha Sabha should always keep a point of contact with local clubs and gymnasiums and in co-operation with them encourage inter-district and inter-provincial sports and tournaments. Young people should be taught exercises in such arms as may be available for use. They should be encouraged to enter the territorial forces and the University Corps for military training. The Sabha should co-operate with institutions in the country, whose aim is to send by their assistance young boys to foreign countries for receiving education in various departments. The ban on foreign travel is now, of course, a thing of the past. But the Hindu Sabha should take a lead in removing even the latent or subdued feeling of resentment against it, which still lurks in the mind of the orthodox section of the society. The spirit of adventure is always a great asset to any ambitious nation, and I for one am inclined to ascribe to this quality in the westerners a large portion of the success which they have achieved in getting the mastery of the world and turning its resources to their political and economic advantage.

In matters of social reform a large ground is yet to be covered. Even supposing that the caste system is one of the characteristics of the Hindu religion and social structure, what an amount of work remains to be done, before we can, by fusion of sub-castes, come to that point where we can say, "Here we are now face to face with only four great castes," and ask ourselves further, "what shall we do with them?" The fusion of sub-castes will

erect a solid building of society out of the innumerable loose, though yet strong bricks which are scattered in isolation. The freedom of inter-marriage, at least within the sub-castes, will widen the range of choice both for brides and bride-grooms, and will give greater opportunities for natural selection, and may eventually lead to the benefits, derivable from eugenics. The variety of spoken tongues naturally appears at first sight as a barrier against intermarriage between the same castes in different provinces. But once a beginning is made and the provincial hiatus is removed, inter-marriage itself will prove a help to the development of a common language among the Hindus. The motor and the railway are indirectly doing a lot to level up minor distinctions of social position. But the efficacy of that work will be increased by the Hindus infusing their willing consciousness into that natural operation. Time has come, again, when we should inquire within ourselves, how we may succeed in simplifying forms of religious ceremonies, keeping intact their pristine purity but scraping off the adventitious accretions or interpolations of verbiage and form. The advantages of a common communal form of worship and prayer are too obvious to need any advocacy, and it behoves some of our leading lights in Hinduism to put their heads together and to formulate such forms of worship and prayer. Then again there is the question of a religious book which all sections of Hinduism may call their own, and in this respect, I have no hesitation in suggesting that, as the Bhagwadgita has retained its hold upon all Hindus of whatever caste, creed, persuasion or philosophy through so many centuries, an attempt should be made to give this book of the Lord's Song the place of honour. The festival of the revelation of Gita is now being regularly celebrated in several parts of India, especially southern India, and may I

suggest in all humility that this should be taken up in Northern India also, so that our astronomical and religious calendar should contain one more holiday, on which the Hindus throughout the length and breadth of India may enjoy spiritual communion on an identical day. Our vedic lore has been wonderfully preserved, but we should now fortify our reverence for it by critical study and rational interpretation. Sanskrit is admittedly the common mother of all Indian vernaculars, and these only stand to gain in point of their classical development and also democratic usefulness by encouragement being given to a more assiduous study of that ancient language. Last but not the least is the necessity of the Hindus celebrating the festivals of their historical heroes who have contributed to the collective glory and fame of Bharatwarsha. An inter-change of inter-provincial compliments is already taking place in this respect, and I wish that the Hindu Maha Sabha includes encouragement to such festivals among its permanent programme.

(6) *Cow-Slaughter and Mosque Music*

The questions of Cow-Slaughter and Mosque Music have been discussed already so threadbare that I need not offer any detailed criticism on it. I content myself with saying that the Hindu Maha Sabha does not stand for aggression in any of these matters, though it will certainly continue to steadfastly advocate the safeguarding of established civil rights for both communities. For, the maintenance of established civil rights is the foundation of even advanced democracies, and once the terra-firma of these rights is lost, every community will be at sea.

(7) *Hindu-Moslem Compromise*

I shall now turn briefly to deal with the vexed question of the relations between the Hindus and Maho-

medans, and the attitude of both towards political Swaraj in India. In his last year's address, Dr. Moonje dealt with this question at some length. He related the history of the compromise proposals that initiated with Mr. Jinnah in March last, and the attitude taken up by the Hindu Members of the Legislatures towards them as expressed in the resolution passed at a meeting at New Delhi on 23rd March 1927, under the presidentship of Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya. I need not go into the details of these proposals and counter-proposals. The mind of you all is full of them. Subsequently at Patna, the Hindu Maha Sabha passed a resolution on this subject, the gist of which was that while the Hindu Maha Sabha adhered to its own resolution passed at the Delhi Session of the Sabha in March 1926, it was prepared to consider any further proposals for the settlement of political differences. It further pointed out that Mr. Jinnah's own proposals were not approved of and endorsed by the whole Mahomedan community and that even dissenting resolutions had been passed by certain Mahomedan organisations. Moreover, Mr. Jinnah himself had given his proposals the form of a solid block and had made it a condition that his proposals must be accepted or rejected as a whole. All these things naturally made it difficult for the Hindu Maha Sabha then to express a clear-cut opinion upon Mr. Jinnah's proposals and the whole thing was, moreover, still in a flux to put forward its own further counter-proposals. About one thing, at any rate, the Sabha was clear, namely, that the creation of new provinces or legislatures in India should be considered independently of any proposals for mixed or separate electorates for India and exclusively on their merits. One important feature of the Patna resolution was that, it requested the All-India Congress Committee not to interfere with or express an

opinion upon this communal matter at that stage. But the All-India Congress Committee did not accept this suggestion. It dealt with the question at Bombay in its own way. At Simla, again, an attempt was made to come to some settlement by a Conference. But even there a stalemate was soon reached. The National Congress took up the subject at Madras in December 1927, and passed a resolution which practically endorsed and clinched the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay. But within a few days from this, the All-India Muslim League at Calcutta gave a different turn even to that resolution. Matters had come to a head, in the meanwhile, by the advent of the Simon Commission, and consequently, this subject received an amount of attention at Delhi both at the hands of the Hindus and Mahomedans in their separate conferences, and also together at the All-Parties Conference. The work was long and strenuous for all. There was earnestness of purpose exhibited on all sides. Skilful diplomacy and frank honest blunt talk were both alternately tried to their utmost capacity according to the temperaments of different individuals. And yet it was found that the points of difference between the Hindus and Mahomedans were, in certain respects, so very fundamental or radical, that the attempt at formulating joint proposals of compromise agreeable to both the communities was a forelorn hope. And, frankly speaking, I do not think that the problem will be solved even at the proposed meeting of the All-Parties Conference at Bombay in May next, unless Mr. Jinnah comes forward with different proposals in the name of at least his party of Mahomedans. To give a clear idea of the complicated position, I will try to analyse the situation as follows :—

(1) One and that a large section of the Mahomedans led by Sir Muhammad Shafi wants (1) separate electorate



and special representation in all elective and representative bodies from top to bottom, (2) maintenance of all the special privileges which the Mahomedans enjoy in all their integrity under the Lucknow Pact with a revision in their favour only in the Punjab and Bengal, (3) certain new privileges which they may get by the regrouping of certain provinces and by the introduction of Reforms etc., in other provinces, and (4) a full proportional share in the services irrespective of qualifications.

(2) Another class of Mahomedans, inspired by a more nationalistic spirit and led by Mr. Jinnah, has seen the futility of communal electorates. It can intellectually perceive the merits of mixed electorates, and is prepared to come to a settlement in that direction, but demands a price for this settlement, either because it considers this settlement to be a concession to the Hindus or, because the Mahomedan community must have certain special privileges to safeguard its interests as an important minority in the country. The price they demand is as follows :—

- (1) Reservation of seats on the basis of population and not on the basis of the electoral strength.
- (2) Reservation of seats for Muslims even when they are in a majority in any Province.
- (3) The creation of more Mahomedan provinces, as for example, by separation of Sind,
- (4) Increased power to Muslims by immediate introduction of full political Reforms in the North-Western Frontier Province.
- (5) The maintenance of full one-third ratio of seats in the Indian Legislature.
- (6) A guarantee that in any scheme of provincial regrouping, the present Mahomedan majority may not be turned into a minority.

- (7) A guarantee that in matters of legislation, the Mahomedans should enjoy a practical veto at the initiation stage under certain conditions.

(3) The position of the Hindus has been expressed as follows in a resolution passed at a meeting of the All-India Hindu Maha Sabha in February 1928 at Delhi :

- (1) Uniformity of franchise for all communities in each province,
- (2) Elections to all elective bodies by mixed or joint electorates,
- (3) Reservation of seats, if demanded or thought necessary, but for a limited period to start with for *minority* communities, and *only* in the legislature, on the basis of any one principle, namely strength of adult population, or taxation and electoral strength,
- (4) No reservation of seats for any majority community,
- (5) Redistribution of provinces on their own merits and on principles of general application with due regard to the administrative, financial and such other considerations,
- (6) No creation of new provinces with a communal object,
- (7) Immediate introduction of judicial and executive reforms in the N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan and Scheduled Districts, and afterwards full political Reforms.
- (8) No communal representation in public services,
- (9) No reservation of a fixed, arbitrary ratio of representatives in any legislature for any community.

(4) The position of the Indian National Congress may be stated to be as follows :

- (1) Joint electorates in all legislatures,
- (2) Reservation of seats if desired on the basis of population,
- (3) Special reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities,
- (4) Full consideration of the just claims of the Sikh community in the Punjab for their representation,
- (5) A scheme of provincial redistribution or adjustment on the linguistic basis,
- (6) Immediate reconstitution of Sindh as a separate province and also of Andhra, Utkal and Karnatak.

A comparison of the positions taken up by all these representative bodies will show to any one at a glance, where the real crux of the situation lies, and how the fundamental condition laid down by Mr. Jinnah, namely, that the Muslim proposals for a compromise should be taken as one solid block and either accepted or rejected as such is responsible for an *impasse*. In his block proposals, matters of mixed or unequal merits are soldered up indissolubly. The points of incompatibility between Mr. Jinnah's proposals which have further been stiffened by the Muslim League resolution of Calcutta, and on the other hand the proposals contained in the Hindu Maha Sabha resolution above quoted are, of course, obvious. But the points of incompatibility even as between the Muslims' position and the position of the Indian National Congress, which were not discerned at the Madras Congress, came into bold relief and prominence like submerged rocks in low tide. Even the Congress leaders who were prepared to stretch a point in favour of the Muslim community, out of gushing good-will, and with a burning desire for compromise and national unity had, I believe, to cry halt in

their career of concessions, when they found themselves face to face with the reality of such a demand by the Muslims, as the reservation of one third of the seats in the Central Legislature for Mahomedans because they were a *minority*, and at the same time a reservation of seats for them in certain provincial legislatures, *though* they would be in a *majority* in those provinces. The result is a deadlock, and all the energy of deliberation and mutual consultation and the power of the will to arrive at a compromise appear to have been wasted. I do not wish to lay the blame at the doors of any particular individual in this matter, because none of us, whether he be a Hindu or a Mahomedan, can have, in a matter like this, things exactly as he would like them to be or as he would like them to be brought about, if he alone were responsible for them. Blessed indeed is the peace-maker, but only if he survives stoning at the hands of both the adverse camps. The result in the concrete is, that while the Lucknow Pact has broken its mast and left its moorings in the minds of both the Hindus and Mahomedans, no substitute even so acceptable as that communal pact has been found for the settlement of the question in Indian politics. The lure of the better has proved the enemy of the good. The Mahomedans are dissatisfied with the Lucknow Pact on the ground of insufficient representation in certain provinces, and the Hindus are dissatisfied with the Pact because it is based on communal electorates and it confers special privileges on one community. In my own opinion, it would not be impossible to find a substitute for the Lucknow Pact, if things were not rigidly mixed up in the Muslim demand. A solution can be found, if the items in the demand could be separately or severally dealt with on their merits, so that while the greatest account could be taken of the merits of any particular

item, the incompatibility of claims could be reduced to a minimum. *Combination and separation are two processes which have their own use and value under different conditions.* The Sanskrit maxim-maker says:

तृणैर्विधृषते रज्जुः यथा नागोऽपि बध्यते ।

The rope which tethers the elephant can be made of mere straw and fiber. But on the other hand, in one of his fables, has not the wise Aesop told us that, while the children could not break the bundle of weak reeds by their whole united strength, each one of them could break any single reed across his knee? The first maxim teaches us the value of combination when face to face with a common enemy, while the fable teaches us the value of individual inquiry and treatment, when matters of controversy arise. Mr. Jinnah's proposals, as a condition precedent to a settlement had all the appearance of a price for a bargain. But even supposing that the Hindus were inclined to disregard this unseemly aspect of the question, the solidarity and rigidity of Mr. Jinnah's block presentation of demands offered even a more insuperable practical difficulty. I think, I can make the position clear by taking the items in the demand one by one and showing that a compromise is not unthinkable so far at least as Mr. Jinnah and his reasonable followers are concerned.

(1) On the merits of joint electorates, both parties are agreed. The Hindus objected to communal electorates from the beginning, and Mr. Jinnah has now openly admitted the futility of communal electorates, even from the point of view of Mahomedans. Both recognise that joint electorates will have the effect of returning, in the elections, men of either community who are less bigotted or less typically communal than others. This would so far be a decided gain by itself, and the resulting benefit

would be not only to any one community, but to the whole nation. On their merits, therefore, both parties should agree to joint electorates.

(2) The demand of the Mahomedans for reservation of seats under mixed electorates is in my opinion perfectly resonable, at any rate, to commence with. The reservation could be made on two principles :

(1) Strength of population, and

(2) Tax-paying or electoral strength of the minority community.

Now the tax-paying qualification can alone be a legitimate claim for a vote in a political democracy. But the Hindus have declared their readiness to agree to reservation for Mahomedans of seats even according to the population basis. I do say that this is a concession on the part of the Hindus, and Mahomedans should accept it as a concession.

(3) But the reservation of seats even for a *majority* population in any province is, I must say, simply an absurd demand. It strikes at the very root of the fusion of interests to be secured by the natural operation of joint electorates. It shows want of communal self-confidence by Mahomedans in themselves which, however, has never been realised in practice before. In fact, this double propping up of reservation—reservation for a *minority* and reservation for a *majority*,—is absolutely unnecessary and indefensible.

(4) The same considerations apply to the demand of the reservation of one-third seats in the Central Legislature. If reservation is to be made on the basis of population, the Mahomedans would get and should be satisfied with the proportional quota which would be due to them and would be returned to the Central Legislature by each Province.

(5) As for the Reforms in N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan, I may say that, as a resolution on this subject was passed without a division in the Legislative Assembly in the last session, and without opposition from the Hindus, there should be no doubt or difficulty about understanding the attitude of the Hindus towards this demand. If this question were to be considered on its own merits, I am personally in favour of the amalgamation of the Settled Districts with the Punjab rather than the grant of these reforms of the N. W. F. Province as at present constituted. At any rate I shall never be prepared to concede either proposal as a *condition* of communal settlement. The demand put forward by Mahomedans in the present manner necessarily gives *political reforms* a communal character, and the Mahomedans should not blame the Hindus, if the demand for political reforms made in a communal spirit is also demurred to in a communal spirit.

(6) As for the separation of Sind, the same considerations apply also in this case. One can legitimately ask for the separation of Sind only if it can be proved that, as a matter of administrative efficiency or the economic well-being of the population as a whole, it is desirable to separate it from Bombay. But no secret has been made of the fact that the separation of Sind is being demanded for no other than communal reasons, and with the object of securing a set-off or an additional hostage in Mahomedan hands as against the advantage which the Hindus have over the Muslim minorities in other provinces. If provinces are to be reorganised on the linguistic basis or any other principle, let those principles be applied to Sind along with the rest of India. There is no point in the Muslims' insistence upon the separation of Sind immediately and apart from the re-formation of the Andhra, Karnatak, etc. as separate provinces. It does

not seem to be realised that provincial reorganization is a very difficult problem, and no one should be easily misled by the example of the National Congress. The Congress, in redrafting its constitution seven years ago, could easily form new provinces for its own administration and propaganda purposes on the linguistic basis, because it involved not a pie worth of extra expenditure to anybody. No one can seriously suggest, however, that the regrouping of provinces for actual political administration, involving as it does an expenditure of crores of rupees, is on the same footing as the distribution of provinces under the Congress Government. The linguistic basis is, of course, a plausible criterion. But it would be wrong to assume that all provinces could be reorganized on that basis for political administration immediately, though there may be a vocal demand for it even now by several provinces. It would be still more wrong to seek the separation of a province like Sind for manifestly communal reasons. An important question like the redistribution of a province which affects vitally the welfare of the population as a whole ought not to be decided by the strength of a communal majority alone; it should have behind it the support of a considerable section of the minority community also. Even those who, in the National Congress, favoured a resolution for an immediate beginning being made with the reorganization of Sind, Andhra, Karnatak and Utkal as new linguistic provinces, were not satisfied with the financial merits of the proposition, as has been proved by the appointment of a Committee for considering the financial position of Sind, though strictly speaking the Committee should have been given the task of inquiring into the case of Andhra, Karnatak, Utkal as well at the same time. The appointment of the Committee is again futile, when we take into account the fact that Mr. Jinnah's block pre-



sentation of Muslim demands so far stands as it is, in case the decision of this Committee were conceivably adverse to the separation of Sind.

(7) As regards the demand for reservation of a share for the Mahomedans in all public services, I must say that, I personally cannot agree to it on principle. The thing can be easily reduced to an absurdity in practice. I confess, I have no idea as to how shares are to be carved out and maintained from time to time for particular communities in every administrative department. Logically there must also be proportionate division of total amount of salaries or grades of seniority. The Government have already gone or are going as far as they could, out of their pronounced good-will for the Mahomedans, and consistently with the maintenance of minimum efficiency in administration. Fixed numerical shares in representation in elective bodies is a practical proposition, but the reservation of posts in public services in every administrative department is a sheer absurdity.

(8) As regards the veto on initiation of legislative matters in legislative bodies to be given to Mahomedans, I have no clear idea as to how that can be done. But I do think that some understanding will have to be arrived at in this direction. Even as it is, in the working of the present legislative bodies, we find that religious and communal matters are dealt with in an unsatisfactory manner, owing to the hurly-burly of the legislative procedure. But that is a subject on which I am not prepared to offer any more definite views at present.

#### (8) *Mahomedan Mentality*

In my speech at Cawnpore, I had commented upon the extra-territorial attachment of the Mahomedan mind in India, which has in a number of ways contributed to the difficulty of the political problem in India. I am glad

to find that a Mahomedan himself has come to my rescue in this matter. In a recent publication with the title of "Peshawar to Moscow", Mr. Shaukat Usmani of the Indian Communist Party has given his wonderful experiences of the great Hijarat which was undertaken by thousands of Indian Mahomedans when the Khilafat agitation was at its highest in the Non-Co-Operation era. In that movement, some Khilafatists had become desperate, and hopeless of satisfying their conscience under the British Raj; they naturally and easily turned to achieve that satisfaction in some foreign land under a Moslem king. But here was a conclusive proof of the want of the Khilafatists' loyalty to the land of India. The pointed Khilafatist spirit pricked the bubble of territorial nationalism of the Mahomedan community. It is true that all the Mahomedans in India did not join the Hijarat, because it was a physical impossibility. But those who actually undertook that expedition exposed typical mentality. The adventure ended very much as it was expected to end, and in the bargain the Hijaratees learnt a very wholesome lesson which I hope the Mahomedan community as a whole would take to heart. For it was found by the Hijarat people that there was very much less love and attachment to the Khilafat in countries governed by Moslem kings than was found in the heart of Mahomedans who had made India their own country for hundreds of years. Let me here quote the very illuminating words of Mr. Shaukat Usmani:—

"It would be just appropriate to mention here the attitude of the Afghan people towards the Khilafat. The Khilafat which meant so much to the Indian Mahomedans had no meaning whatsoever for the Afghan masses. They remained quite indifferent to it, save a few who saw in it a potent weapon against the British Government.

To an average religious Afghan, 'millat' did not mean more than nation. Their outlook was out and out a national one. Whomsoever we questioned about the allegiance to the Khilafat, his reply used to come as a rude shock. It is worth while for our Indian Moslem leaders—the arch-extra-territorialists—to go to Afghanistan and learn from the obscurest Afghan peasant the fundamentals of Eastern nationalist conception. I invite our Maulanas to come with me to Afghanistan, Turkestan, Azerbaijan or Turkey and show me half the zeal about Khalifa and Arabic there, which we see in India. Through a very disastrous process the Indian Musalmans have evolved this erratic extra-territorial patriotism and through their unredeemable mistakes have alienated the entire Muslim population from grasping their elementary duties towards the place of their birth. India still remains *Kafri*stan to them but Arabia too has been desecrated by railways and modern scientific communications. The Bedouin ship of the desert has been replaced by swift moving automobiles. The holy sages of Arabia feel more comfortable in modern conveyances. Ibn Saud is revolutionising the entire peninsula by introducing machinery. The Mullahism which exultantly emerged from all sweeping political and military convulsions and religious revolutions of the past centuries is unresistingly giving way before the transforming power of the rising industrial forces in that holy country. But our Maulanas are still dreaming of the revival of the past, of rehabilitating Indian Moslems in Arabia, Mesopotamia, Turkey or Allah knows where."

(9) *Conclusion*

Ladies and gentlemen, I have detained you long already. I do not want to tire your patience and will, therefore, bring my address to a close. Conferences are

being held for the last three years to settle the points of differences between the Hindus and Mahomedans, in matters religious as well as political. At Delhi in 1924 we marked some progress in arriving at a formula for settling religious disputes. But things went from bad to worse even after that. At Simla, last year threads were again taken up, but without useful results. The attempt at the settlement of political differences has shared the same fate. The question, therefore, arises—What next? My reply to that is "Wait and see." But I do not give that reply in any cynical spirit. For I really think that the compromise proposals perhaps require some rest. It is now better to see the tree of communal good-will grow from a distance than pull it up frequently by its roots, as it were, to see how it is growing. The discussions and deliberations held during the last three or four years cannot all go for nothing. The discovery of the fundamental positions where both Hindus and Mahomedans stand is in itself a great gain. Digging up of foundations is a necessary operation for undertaking a structure. The sight of rock-bottom puts heart into the building engineer. The minds of leaders on both sides have now been sufficiently saturated with the pros and cons of the vexed question. And we may as well wait for a while for the right psychological moment again to arrive when a spontaneous institution may come to our help for another attempt to take up the work of communal pourparlers. A sudden new idea is sometimes effective like a change in bowling in a cricket match, when both batsmen and bowlers seem to have settled down into a tiring game. The position, bad as it is, is by no means hopeless. For, the wise men on both sides cannot but realise that no miracle is going to be performed for them and that they have got to solve the problem for themselves, as best as they can.

with the use of their own wits assisted and prompted by their national patriotism. The course of international politics is bound to teach moderation to our Mahomedan brethren, as the growing realisation of their helpless condition in India is bound to teach the same lesson to the Hindus. The poet has truly said,

‘तप्तेन तप्तमयसा घटनाय योग्यं’

In the meanwhile, and in fact perhaps forever hereafter, the Hindus should in my view, spend greater attention and energy on the consideration of the question as to how they will, so far as they can, give the best account of themselves, in the work of achieving political Swarajya. Let them not make a fetish of joint electorates and feel stunned or dazed by disappointment, if these do not seem to be coming immediately. If we have to wade through communal electorates for some time, let us bow to that irksome discipline. By whatever electorates we are returned, we can all see for ourselves that so far at least as Government do not transfer to Indians real responsibility and along with it, the power of initiative, our work in the Legislative Councils is mainly a negative one, i.e. that of watch-dogs of the nation, keeping a watchful eye on Government's doings and exercising such control over them as is possible under the circumstances. Outside the Councils, the question of electorates does not arise at all. The work outside the Councils is, it is admitted on all hands, more important than within, and it is enough to tax all the energy, all the talent, all the resourcefulness, and all the patriotism that we can command.

Whatever be our woes, there is much to console the Hindu community with the thought that its record of relations in past history and present conduct, towards both Mahomedans and Christians, is absolutely clean. Apart from the fault of being a numerical majority in India, what

have the Hindus ever done to prevent, check or imperil the work of building a common nationality in India *vis-à-vis* these other religious communities? Their toleration has been proverbial, and to a fault in the opinion of certain historians. How would it have been possible without the toleration on their part for the Mahomedan population in India to grow from zero to 7 crores and the Christian population to two crores in barely seven centuries? And mind you, it is not as if the Hindus never were in possession of political power in any part of India to put a check on this. I shall content myself with citing the example of the great Shivaji, because of him at any rate it could not be said that he had no political power. And yet here is what the great historian, Prof. Jadunath Sarkar, says about Shivaji in a lecture given on the last Shivaji festival at Madras. He says:—"In that age of religious bigotry, he followed a policy of the most liberal toleration for all creeds. The letter which he wrote to Aurangzeb, protesting against the imposition of the poll-tax on the Hindus, is a masterpiece of clear logic, calm persuasion, and political wisdom. Though he was himself a devout Hindu, he could recognise true sanctity in a Mussalman, and, therefore, he endowed a Mahomedan holy man named Babia Yaqut with land and money, and installed him at Kelsi. All creeds had equal opportunities in his services and he employed a Muslim Secretary named Quazi Haidar, who, after Shivaji's death, went over to Delhi and rose to the Chief Justiceship of the Mogul Empire. There were many Muhammedan Captains in Shivaji's army and the Chief Admiral was an Abyssinian named Shiddi Misti. The Maratha soldiers had strict orders not to molest any women or rob any Mahomedan saint's tomb or hermitage. Copies of the Quran which were seized in the course of their campaigns were ordered to be

carefully preserved and then handed over with respect to some Mahomedan. Among his Hindu servants there were Brahmins and Non-Brahmins enjoying the highest civil and military offices—Brahmins, Prabhus (*i. e.* Kayasthas,) Marathas, Kunbis and the trading caste." I prefer this quotation because in this eulogy, provincial egoism has no part. Then again, even apart from Shivaji, I can challenge any one to cite any well-known or proved instances of reconversions to Hinduism which were obtained by fraud or force, ever since the Shuddhi and Sanghathan movements were set on foot. That being so, are Hindus to be branded as communal anti-nationals? Is it a sin for them to wish to remain Hindus and participate in the future Swaraj as Hindus? It is well if the other communities co-operate with the Hindus in a fair spirit in the work of achieving Swarajya. But if they do not, that is well also, if not so well. The Hindu pilgrim's never failing experience is that if he starts on the journey with a determination to complete his pilgrimage though all alone, he soon begins to get fellow-pilgrims on the way as he proceeds. Companionship is indeed good but self-reliance is always better.

## The Commonwealth of India Bill Conference

*Speech by Mr. N. C. Kelkar, the Chairman of the  
Reception Committee*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel it a high honour and privilege to welcome you all to this Conference. We meet here to-day to give a hearty send-off to Mrs. Besant and to wish her God-speed in her special mission to England. Our good-bye

to her, however, is only *au revoir*, गम्यतां पुनर्दृश्याय. For we do wish that she should come back to India soon again and acquaint us personally with the fortunes she meets with in England in pushing forward the Commonwealth of India Bill. She is at present the only active and the only influential advocate of the cause of India in England; and we feel grateful to her for this special service of hers to this country, because the Congress still continues to abdicate her own legitimate functions and her own duty in this respect.

The flood of Non-co-operation is abating. The water is also less muddy. Some of the old familiar landmarks have already emerged on the surface, and some others, though still submerged, have become clearly visible. One might expect, therefore, that foreign propaganda would hereafter receive its proper share of rehabilitation. Prejudices die hard, and the Congress is still indulging in the formal pretence that she is above the use of certain methods in political work. The pretence, however, cannot last long. The impending fate of our brethren in South Africa has aroused us to the knowledge that Indian politics can easily transcend Indian frontiers. We have never been able to effectively conceal our interest in or attraction for the smallest event that happens on the floor of the Parliament or the faintest sound that is made in the India Office and is likely to affect this country for good or evil. We never lost our appetite for foreign news, whether it really concerned us or not. And we always entertained a vague hope like Mr. Micawber, that some slight good is sure to turn up and to be wafted to us by the evil wind of foreign complications. And yet we affected to put a ban upon foreign propaganda and to spurn the sympathy of even the Labour Party in England, which has always, for the last six or seven years, reserved



one of the resolutions at its annual general conference for expressing its considered good will towards India and its sincere wishes for the inauguration of Swarajya in India. Fortunately, however, a reaction is coming. Most of the aversion for foreign propaganda has been got over, and even the residue will, let us hope, soon disappear after the visit of some of our illustrious Non-co-operators and obstructionists to England and the European Continent.

Well, under the peculiar conditions of Congress politics I have just referred to, the persistent efforts of Mrs. Besant to interest the British mind in Indian National politics have a value of their own. Unmindful of the cost and trouble, she has been working single-handed in getting popular support for the Commonwealth of India Bill and pushing it through Parliament at the hands of the only political party in England which, when it comes into power, is likely to make itself responsible for the same in an official capacity as a party. But here in India some of us have hesitated to give her assistance and co-operation, limited even to the meagre measure of formal membership of the Federation of which the present is a conference. And what a motley variety of views do the hesitants and the dissidents disclose! Some shudder at the very sight of the Bill because it is a constitutional measure, and *they* are persons too proud and patriotic to touch anything which has the look of constitutional agitation as a political weapon. Some smell co-operation in the Bill, and have they not proclaimed Non-co-operation with this Satanic Government under the banner of Mahatma Gandhi? Some object to it because it is obviously an item of foreign propaganda against which the Congress has set its face deliberately. Some take exception to the Bill because they think a Bill is 'a petition after all, however skillfully it may be concealed. Some would not touch it because

it obviously recognises the British Parliament as possessing authority to say the last word in the framing of a constitution for India; whereas they stand for the recognised principle of self-determination in politics. Some object to the alleged assumption in the Bill that connection between the British Empire and India is according to the Bill, to be ever-lasting. Some do not think that the first slice or instalment to be secured by the Bill is substantial enough. Some do not like the draftsmanship of the Bill. Some would have the arrangement of its provisions and sections different from what it is. Some vaguely think they themselves would have drafted the Bill better. Some object to it because Mrs. Besant has something or anything to do with it. And lastly there are some who must object to the Bill and find fault with it because it is in no sense *their* doing and does not lend exclusive credit to their name, and who fear to join in any scheme or undertaking or proposal lest they should be selling their own wisdom too cheap by accepting or approving a thing which does not originate with them.

You have here thus a class of hesitants and dissidents at one end of which is a man actuated with the most extreme political principles and yet with the most unselfish of motives; and at the other end you have one who has practically no principles at all but who is eaten up with the most selfish of motives. Now I do not care to answer each one of these objectors separately and in detail. But I would give a sort of a general answer to them all by stating the reasons which actuated me for instance in giving my support to the Bill and joining the movement for which this Federation stands and this conference is convened.

The Bill is of course capable of improvement. But this only means that it is not the acme of perfection. But

what bill or act is there of which this could not be truthfully said? On the other hand, it suffices for me and should suffice for any one that, it has been drafted by some of the ablest lawyers in India and England. Mrs. Besant has never refused the offer of a single amendment nor does she insist or can hope that the Bill will pass the scrutiny of the Parliament without any improvement of form, if and when the Bill goes to the second reading in the Parliament. As for the substance of the Bill, well, it embodies some of the obvious proposals which have been put forward for the Indian nation in the matter of the demand for an immediate instalment of self-government. The pace of the substitution of British by Indian control, assumed in the Bill, is fairly rapid. And can we not honestly say that if we really get what is contained or safeguarded by the Bill, we get more than we might have reasonably expected to get within the next few years by any conceivable agitation unless of course a miracle was to be performed for our special benefit? As for the category of the method of political agitation under which the Bill falls, I have no hesitation in saying that it is of course constitutional agitation. But I contend that no one is, for the moment, under the illusion of the possibility of an immediate revolution, even apart from the chances of its success. When I say revolution, I mean of course a mass movement affecting a considerable portion of, if not the whole of the country. I do not at all advert to what an individual or a group of individuals may do when drawn into the vortex of a patriotic emotion and injured honour or self-respect. There can be no limit, and no one, however high-placed in the hierarchy of leadership, ought to seek to name a limit, beyond which individual efforts may not go in seeking the satisfaction of a patriotic urge. For those who do and dare to take the consequences there can be no law. But

when we speak of a national mass movement of revolution by violence or armed resistance we can easily perceive its limits. On the other hand, the Congress, speaking deliberately and in the name of the nation, had declared that revolution, by even mass civil disobedience, is for the present an impossibility. What then is the immediate alternative? Can it be inaction or even despair? No. The alternative must be constitutional agitation, on a national scale and as a national or routine effort, though even this, we know, is naturally likely to be punctuated by occasional movements of individual or group civil disobedience or even violence, limited by intention or the very nature of the movement to specific purpose or occasion or area or agency. *Ad hoc* movements of this nature are mere forced or accidental deflections of the needle on the political dial. They do not permanently affect or alter the normal course of national political action which in any country must be constitutional agitation. Without seeking to put an extinguisher upon the light and fire of individual sentiment, inspiration, ambition or enterprise, constitutional agitation serves as a vehicle for the expression of the daily output of thought and energy of the politically minded men in any country. The discontent arising out of the evils of maladministration and the clash of popular and official will, only feeds upon and does not extinguish the flame of constitutional agitation which is the initial torch that may, under conceivable conditions, light up a conflagration.

The present Bill, therefore, need not be looked down upon even by the more hopeful, the more brilliant, the more ardent spirits amongst us, simply because it takes the form of constitutional agitation. No one except a mere dreamer can hope for an immediate contretemps, which may give us Self-government by an agency or instrument uncon-

nected with the British Parliament. With the best of intentions, with the greatest gushing good-will, nay even with a maddening impulse of generosity, the Parliament cannot dispense or administer Self-government to us except by a formal statute ; and the present Bill does nothing more, but it also does nothing less than embody such a formal statute. We in India have not yet done as much as Ireland to deserve a grant of Self-government, and yet in Ireland the nation had to accept a statute of the sovereign legislature as a vehicle to convey Self-government. The Bill is after all a token demand. And those who condemn it as too insipid or tame for them, will do well to remember that it shall eventually tax all the bravery and sacrifice that may be in them to make it an accomplished fact. Let them not think that any sterling quality of theirs will be wasted by reason of the Bill.

We should again welcome the Bill for two special reasons. The first is that it gives a shutting reply to the objection that the demand of India for Self-government is a vague and inchoate one. The Bill at once silences those who take up the technical plea that they, with the best of intentions, have nothing concrete to go upon. I know that thing cannot be taken further. But it is up to us to silence every variety of critics. The second reason is that the Bill opens up a vista of constructive thought in the wilderness of *Non-co-operation through which we have passed. In the line* frenzy of 1921 Mahatma Gandhi might say with becoming dignity that he knew not what Swarajya was or consisted of. But when we have laid aside the various boycotts, when we have entered the Councils, struggle to capture every place of power and authority in them, accepted seats on committees or commissions or standing bodies, and lastly when Mahatma Gandhi himself can without loss of personal dignity or the Non-co-operation spirit

go and see the Governor to secure for the agriculturist such small mercies as may be secured by the opening of a Khadi Department in the Agricultural Exhibition, whose object, according to certain wicked critics, is to capture the Indian market for English ploughs and such other implements, then surely there should be no sense of levity or impropriety or political dillettantism, attached to a Bill like this which seeks to give formal legal shape and form to the substance of the national demand for Swarajya and seeks to beard the lion of the sovereign Legislature in his own den.

In conclusion, I would ask this Conference to wish Mrs. Besant a happy voyage and success in her mission. At this age of hers, she seems to live only for winning Self-government to India. Her life and her being are concentrated in the one idea of persuading or compelling the Britisher to do justice to the sons of her adopted motherland. For she has faith as much in the sense of justice of the one as the righteousness of the cause of the other.

*(Donlay, 16-6-26)*

### **The Societies Registration (Amendment) Bill**

Sir, I rise to move that the Bill further to amend the Societies Registration Act, 1860, for certain purposes, be taken into consideration.

In moving this motion I may as well offer a few brief observations. In the first place, I would like to point out that this is a single clause Bill, small, innocent and non-contentious, and it may easily be accepted by anybody without demur or protest. It does not tread upon anybody's corns. It only seeks to enlarge the scope of the

Act by adding two or three words which are clear in themselves and which are very useful as an addition to the Act. Even supposing the words suggested be considered superfluous, they are necessary to make the position clear. For I may at once tell the House that the Bill is not intended to tilt against a mere phantom of doubt; it is based upon a fact or two of actual experience. The experience is that in some cases registration has been refused by Registrars of Societies to bodies which should have obtained that registration without any objection. In the first place now I would like to tell this House what the Act is. I am not going to read the Act, but I will content myself with simply paying a tribute to the Act, and it is this. It is a very useful Act. It has helped many an institution in this country to be built up. The Act gives incorporated societies legal power to appoint their own government, hold their own property, perform their legal transactions, and even to provide for their own succession. The Act deliberately sets up a legal fiction, but that legal fiction works very useful wonders. If we look back upon the history of the different institutions in this country, it will have to be admitted that many of the institutions have come into being and have played their part in a useful manner simply because they could be incorporated under this Act. Now, Government may perhaps stand up to grudge me this Bill because in their opinion the amendment of the Act has the effect of casting a reflection upon the discretion of the Registrars of Societies or the previous legislators who enacted the Act. But I at once assure the House that I am not proceeding with the Bill in any fault-finding spirit. As for the poor Registrars, they could not help, I think, doing what they did because the language of the Act is in itself extremely narrow; and, even the legislators who framed the original

Act 70 years ago. I am not prepared to blame, because the time itself was such that there were no political institutions in existence or political education. It was a time only for primary schools and a chance college or high school here and there, and also a time for small libraries called Native General Libraries, patronised by grandees and officers and Europeans, containing a few books here and there, and crude museums which were set up for the enlightenment, as it was supposed, of the uneducated public. That was the mere beginning of public life in India; and I cannot blame the legislators of the time for omitting political education from the number of items that were actually mentioned in section 20 of the Act. But much water has flowed under the bridge since the original enactment of the Act and the present is a time when the whole atmosphere is surcharged with political spirit and political education. In fact our present reforms and the future of responsible government is supposed to be built up on the solid foundation of political education, and now at any rate we must be prepared to rectify the previous errors. The legal clothes of the society must be made to suit the latest development of the body politic. Now look at section 20 of this Act. Section 20 reads—

“The following societies may be registered under this Act : charitable societies, the military orphan funds or societies established at the several presidencies of India, societies established for the promotion of science, literature, or the fine arts, for instruction, the diffusion of useful knowledge, the foundation or maintenance of libraries or reading rooms for general use among the members or open to the public, or public museums and galleries of paintings and other works of art, collections of natural history, mechanical and philosophical inventions, instruments or designs. ”



Now everyone, I think, will admit that this drafting of the section is absolutely hopeless. In my opinion it is neither a good logical definition nor a good logical division. It is a failure as an attempt either at complete enumeration or at complete generalisation. It is an odd mixture of particulars and generalities. The other day I read this section to a friend who was rather witty ; and he said to me it was reminiscent to him, at any rate, of a Zoo rather than of Noah's Ark. He was right. For the noble Noah's Ark was at least thoroughly exhaustive in its contents, thoroughly representative of all the beings who were to be saved from the Flood. But this section has the funny appearance of a mere Zoo in which odds and ends of exhibits are displayed as they come to hand. He was right, because here you see military orphans popping up their heads against charitable institutions and mechanical designs and inventions. Obviously this is all very crude drafting of the section and it wants to be corrected. Now the Act does in the first place by its title provide for three things—literary, scientific and charitable societies. The preamble takes it a step further. It brings in fine arts and purposes other than charitable purposes; and the preamble is further amplified in section 20. But it is difficult to argue that political education can, by any stretch of imagination, be brought under any of the heads mentioned in section 20. Political associations have of course in their own way to do with literature. They issue political literature but they cannot for that reason be called societies established for the promotion of literature. Politics in itself is a fine art, but a political association is not one established for the promotion of the fine arts. Politics again is a science, but a political association is not established for the promotion of science. Science there means natural science. Political bodies do indeed

provide reading rooms and libraries as a necessary equipment of their business, and some political bodies may conceivably also concern themselves with paintings, picture galleries, busts and statues; but they concern themselves with these not as works of arts but as a source of political inspiration only.

Now it only remains to consider one point. It may possibly be argued that political bodies may have their purposes served, so far as funds are concerned, by Act VI of 1890; but if you look closely at the Act that misconception will be easily removed. It is no doubt an Act for the vesting and administration of property held in trust for charitable purposes; but in section 3 you at once see that it contemplates the creation of only a treasurer for such charitable funds and he in himself is a corporation sole. So that does not provide for any combination of individuals as a society. Now the only words that might appear to make my amendment superfluous are "diffusion of useful knowledge". Well, Sir, I wish that view were correct and could be upheld; but as I have already said, the Bill is based upon a fact or two of experience which belie this interpretation. The Registrars might of course grant registration to political bodies wishing for registration on the assumption that they had to do with useful knowledge. But as I said, they refused registration in some cases, whether because they regarded political education as useless knowledge or perhaps as infernal knowledge, I don't know.

Now I turn to the two small amendments which I am proposing. First of all, I refer to the words "political education" which I am specifically suggesting to be inserted as an amendment. I do want political education to be recognised as one of the objects mentioned in section 20. Now by adding these words it may be said I am only

adding one more category to this museum or zoo, but perhaps that is inevitable. We know that in Hindu society when one proceeds to break caste he is only proceeding in a manner which results in adding one more caste to society; but that is inevitable. If I suggest one more category it is because for my purpose it is necessary. If my purpose could be otherwise served I would not add to the difficulties of this section.

Then as for the second amendment, that should be really acceptable because the words are "any other purpose of public utility". That I suppose is a comprehensive enough term, and it would also cover the words "or political education" and the words "useful knowledge". But in order to clear all doubts I have added both the words "political education" and the words "any other purpose of public utility".

Sir, I said the Bill was based on one or two facts of experience. I may here relate a small joke which was current in Bombay and Poona about 20 years ago. The joke is this. About the year 1905 the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society. Now it happened that a Bombay Parsi merchant with keen and lively business instincts at once wrote to Mr. Gokhale congratulating him upon the brilliant idea of founding a society for supplying 'domestic servants'. Perhaps he himself was worried with domestic troubles like many of us, and he naturally looked upon Mr. Gokhale as a saviour of the contemporary generation of men distressed by the eternal problem of domestic servants. And I suppose he was also prepared to concede to Mr. Gokhale a patriotism large enough to provide domestic servants for the whole of India. When I heard that joke for the first time I said aloud to myself, "Well, such is fame!" For that was the estimate which this Parsi gentleman had formed of the

celebrated Mr. Gokhale. This of course is only the ridiculous aspect of the thing; but the serious aspect is this, that the Servants of India Society failed to secure registration at the hands of the Registrar, not in one but in two provinces. That is the fact upon which I want to lay stress. Now, if Mr. Gokhale's Society had wanted to train cooks and scullions, and grooms and governesses, then perhaps he would have had no difficulty in getting his Society registered; but if instead of training governesses he was aspiring to train a few Governors at his Society then of course the trouble would come in and the Society could not be registered. There were many other incidental disadvantages to the Society as my information goes, arising out of this refusal of registration, such as the loss of the benefit of a number of annuities which they might have got if the Society was a registered one. But of course on that aspect of the question I am not going to lay any stress. I lay stress upon the right of political associations and bodies to get their registration. From these facts it will be seen that the Act does not provide for the registration of political bodies or associations, and it will at once be conceded that the amendment which I am seeking to make is essentially useful from that point of view.

(13-2-1927)

### The Indian Budget

Sir, I wish to make a few observations on the motion that has been moved from a constitutional point of view. In doing so I must first of all say by way of personal explanation one or two things that have been indirectly commented upon. I admit I was one of the three people who sent in very big cuts, in the sense of leaving a very small margin as far as possible for the establishment.

but I would like to give my own reason for this. I do not know the reasons of other people. My reason is this. I have no mathematical genius, but for a moment I wanted to try the game of a mathematician and to investigate mathematical minima for a certain purpose. Now why was I doing that? I was investigating mathematical minima because I wanted to make it relevant to the Government policy of investigating mathematical minima in giving political concessions, and that I say is the appropriateness of my making that sort of cut. I really wanted to offer this as an example of the depths to which one can go in cutting down the establishment as against the depths to which Government can go in cutting down the concessions that they can give to us. The cut is technically aimed only at the establishment of course. The Executive Council itself has been described as 'untouchable,' for the grant for them is non-votable. We can only reduce the grant, if we may, of the establishment, and supposing we succeed in doing that what will be the result? I know a case like that happened last year in the Bombay Council. The establishment of the Director of Industries was cut down by the Council, and the poor fellow had to go without an establishment and I do not know what he afterwards did—whether he went to some other job or did something else. But I have no fears about what the Executive Council will do if their establishment is cut; and, therefore, I do not want to follow that kind of argument. My point is that this cut is really meant not for the establishment but for the Executive Council itself. The significance of the cut does not stop even there, because we regard in this matter the Executive Council as the vehicle which may carry our censure to the Home Government and also because the Executive Council is the representative of the Home Government, and the *de facto* gov-

vernment in this country. They are the men on the spot and if we want administrative reforms we have got to look to them first because, unless they are in point of spirit a really national government, we cannot rely upon anybody to put our case before the Home Government as fully as they themselves do sometimes. In fairness to Government I will say this. From a perusal of the official papers, I have come across instances in which they have fought tooth and nail with the Home Government. The location of the reserves is a case in point. The Government of India wanted the reserves to be located in India and the Home Government wanted to keep the reserves in England. The Government of India wanted the reserves to be kept liquid to be commanded at any time. The Home Government said that they would invest them under the pretence that the investments would bring some interest. Even an imperious Viceroy like Lord Curzon, be it said to his credit, resisted strongly the suggestions for Imperial Preference. I do not deny that this Indian Government sometimes in its own interest, and sometimes inspired by the instincts of a national government really fights with the Home Government. But they do not do it as often and as spiritedly and vigorously as we want them to do. We want to convert them to nationalism. We want the Government of India to become a national Government. The late Mr. Montagu, we all know, made it a condition that India should be given fiscal autonomy and financial autonomy if the Legislature and the Indian Government agreed. We do want the Indian Government through its Executive Council and the Indian Legislature to agree as far as possible, but they can agree only if this Government will be nationalised in spirit, not otherwise.

Now, speaking from the constitutional point of view, the present constitution was given, as we all know, to

India under the stress of difficulties and calamities arising out of the War and partly also out of gratitude to India for what she did for the Home Government during the War. But when the piping times of peace were restored, all that was forgotten and the Government on the spot began to work the constitution in a most grudging and slow fashion. And we realise that we have to fight the ground inch by inch. That is a very painful process but we have got to go through it. Now what about the responsibility of the Government itself? It is very difficult to find out where the responsibility is. Some time ago I saw a cartoon in the *Punch* which purported to describe responsibility among the Cabinet and the picture was drawn of seven big boys each pointing his own thumb at the other and the circle was completed. That represented the total absence of the means to discover the real responsibility. I might refer this House also to the story in the Grecian mythology in which we are told there were three one-eyed sisters. They had a single transferrable common eye between them. Each used the eye for her own mischievous purpose, and when somebody wanted to tax the deity for having done it, she transferred the eye to the other deity and said, "I was blind." That represents the state of responsibility. Take the case of a passport. We ask why a certain passport was not given to a person to come back to India. We are told by the Indian Government that the Home Government is in the way. Questions are asked in Parliament and we are told that it is the Indian Government who must take the initiative, and they say the Bombay Government must make the suggestion. Where do we find responsibility as between the three? There is obviously no means to locate responsibility. Our arms are not so long as to reach the Home Government beyond the seas. We must, for the purpose, make the best use of

the Home Government, and they are to examine the Indian people by a sort of examination every 10 years or thereabouts, and then decide themselves what further measure of progressive responsibility can be given to the Indian people. Not so the preamble of the Act of the South African Government, where it is laid down in the preamble that whereas the people of South Africa have come to a unanimous decision about a particular form of Government to be given to them, therefore this Statute is being passed in order to give legal form to that understanding. And if you will read the speech of, I think, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, you will find that the Home Government openly admitted that they had pledged themselves not to alter a single word in the understanding recorded by the South African Round Table Conference. And we are asked for a certificate of fitness, and without that certificate of fitness we are not to be given self-government. Now it is admitted, not by British politicians, but by dispassionate thinkers and philosophers, that India at one time possessed a very large degree of civilization. It knew what civilized government meant, it knew what military government meant; it knew what practical administration meant. We can say that the British administration as now run has drawn very largely upon the schemes and plans of practical administration which were actively in use under our old governments. But we have to produce a certificate. *The Indian people are still living.* We are still living in this Assembly before the eyes of Government, but what is required is a certificate that we have been living in the intermediate stage between that old civilization of ours and the present time. It reminds me of the auditor's demand for a certificate that a man who desires to draw his pension is still alive! He may have a certificate that he was living in December last and he is now alive and



asking for his pension: but that is not enough for the auditor ; the man must arm himself with a certificate to show that he has continued to live in the intervening time between the months of December and March. That is the sort of certificate of fitness which is being demanded from us, and it is supposed that we cannot provide that kind of certificate. The audit rules must really be changed ! But really, Sir, this matter of fitness or unfitness is merely a verbal shibboleth, and much is made of it simply because we are absolutely impotent at this moment to have things our own way. But it would be useful, I think, to ask Government really to play the game, and it is for us also in return to call upon them to play the game. And what ought the game to be ? You have a legislative body and proclaim to the world that it has an elected majority. What is an elected majority there for ? A hundred elected members come here for what purpose ? For the purpose, as has been remarked by a previous speaker, of mere talk. And if we are here merely for talk, of course we can go on talking as much as we like and as often as we like without coming to any particular decision and without serving any useful purpose in calling so many people to the House if you give them no real responsibility. That man must have been inspired who, in connection with the Reforms, first uttered the word " responsibility." I appreciate that responsibility; I admire the sense of the man who suggested that word as a solution for the Indian political problem. But the question is, what sort of responsibility have we got in the present Assembly or in the local Legislative Councils in the provinces ? There is absolutely no responsibility at all. Now what would be responsibility ? It would be this. Supposing we took a wrong decision or a decision the Government thought was wrong: then it should be up to the Government to call upon us to prove that we were right-

In practical administration how else can we prove that we are in the right unless we are in office ourselves ? On the other hand, if we defeat the Government in a matter on which we think they are wrong, what is the position ? From these Benches we cry out and say, " Retire and resign". But who is going to resign or retire ? They will sit tight in their places; they will draw their pay; they will enjoy all the privileges of office; they will enjoy the full measure of power; and like the insistent housewife in the household they will claim the last word in the debate also. (Laughter.) After all we know that responsibility can be realised only by going through responsibility, *not by playing with it from outside*. We know the Gladstonian formula about liberty. Gladstone said that man becomes fit for liberty by exercising liberty; not by teaching him from outside what liberty is and how to enjoy it and exercise it by actually giving him liberty. In this connection I may note the famous formula suggested by a high political thinker whom I respected. His formula was this. If, he said, you want to prepare a man efficiently administering an office, you must give him an even higher office. For instance, if you wanted a man to be an efficient Deputy Collector you must make him a Collector. In the office of Collector he may perhaps be a failure to a certain extent, but by the very exercise of the higher responsibility he would at least be a good Deputy Collector. That was the formula which he framed, and I think that there is a great truth in that formula. If you want people to be really responsible you must give them responsibility not only in a full measure but in a fuller measure. That is sometimes necessary.

Now by responsible government we want two things. First of all, Indianization of the services in the higher ranks. But not only that, for we shall never be satis-

fied even if the whole of the Executive Council to-morrow is Indian but remains as irresponsible as it is now. We shall never be satisfied unless we make them responsible to the will of the Legislature, because after all that is the only one function which the Executive Council in my opinion is bound to perform, and that is, to carry out the will of the Legislature. The reconciliation of the will of the Legislature and powers of the Executive Council of course is a difficult problem, and it is being solved in a number of ways in other countries. Now here also we want the same to be done, and that can be achieved only by putting Indians in the highest places as often as possible and ultimately making even the Indians responsible to the Legislature.

Now, with regard to the appointment of Indians to higher offices, we know that so long as no Indian was appointed to any high office, of course the Government pronouncement, the Government proclamation, was that nobody was fit to take that post. But since that policy was inaugurated in Lord Morley's time how many Indians have filled how many of the higher posts, and was there ever a single Indian who was found to be unfit? Did the Government ever proclaim that a particular Indian who enjoyed a high office ever proved unfit? It is admitted, therefore, that all those Indians who were put in high positions did prove themselves fit, and, therefore, that is a very strong argument for other Indian people also being put in the highest offices as often as possible. Now in this matter we know that men have been found like Lord Sinha who proved themselves not only fit for any high office in the gift of Government (at this stage an Honourable Member passed between the speaker and the Chair and was called to order by Mr. President), but above any high office that can be offered to him—and we want peo-

ple like that. I feel proud when an Indian occupies a high post, a high office, but, Sir, I feel prouder when I see an Indian who rejects a high office. My pride consists in having Indians not only who accept office but in having Indians who are so high in their position that they will spurn office and reject a high office if offered to them. That of course does not mean that every office should be rejected, and that is certainly our point of view—the point of view of the Responsive Co-operationists: while we want some people to take offices, useful offices and serve their electors and the country in the best manner they can, we want other people in the country who must be above taking office; and the combination of people who take office, and take office for the good of the country, and of those people who are above office—is in my opinion an ideal combination. (*The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman*. "The best of all possible words!") Of course it would be invidious to mention names, but restricting myself only to a few outstanding Indians who have departed, I can certainly refer to Indians like Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade and Gokhale, who certainly would have done useful work, successful work as Finance Ministers. But it was not so in their time. But even supposing offices were thrown open in their time, I know that among these people there were some people who might have rejected office. Now I myself wanted to read to the House a passage about the formation of Cabinets in England, and my friend Mr. Belvi has already done that. I, therefore, need not do that again, but referring to the long quotation he read to the House I will say only this that even in England it is an admitted fact that the Cabinet is manned by people who have a general position and an ascertained quantity of intellect and influence in the country. It is not experts alone or people

with business experience or administrative experience who are there. It is the duty, the legitimate duty of people, who are in touch with public opinion, to occupy high offices where high policies are formed or confirmed. For the rest we naturally depend upon the permanent officials, for whom I have got the highest respect because it is they who really run the administration. But above them of course must come people from the public who have got great intellects, who have great influence and, being in touch with the real public sentiment, will dictate to the permanent officials the policy which should rule the Government.

Now I will take the point, that is, about the fitness, the alleged fitness or unfitness, as it may be said, of the Colonies which enjoy self-government or were given self-government and I will just point out what was the actual condition of things in certain Colonies at the time, when they were regarded as fit for self-government or were even enjoying self-government. Now it is well known that in England itself the educational qualification has never formed a test of fitness, as also in the British Dominions. That also is the case here. Therefore, we need not be asked to stay our hand and to wait indefinitely for a fuller measure of self-government because the Indian people or the electorate are not sufficiently educated. It has been always said that you have not got a good electorate, you have not got an educated electorate, therefore, wait for their education. My answer is that even in England and in the Dominions, education has never been accepted as a qualification for an electorate. So even if my Indian elector is uneducated, that quite suffices for me if he is ordinarily an intelligent man and knows his business. Now in the year 1845, "only about one in six even of the children at school in England was found able

to read the scriptures with any ease, and even for these the power of reading often left them when they tried a secular book." In 1845 England was of course enjoying full self-government. About the teachers, Henry Craik says in his book on State and Education:

"The teaching of the schools was in the hands of men who had scarcely any training and who had often turned to the work because all other work had turned away from them."

Now about Canada Lord Durham himself says:

"It is impossible to exaggerate the want of education among the inhabitants. No means of instruction have ever been provided for them, and they are almost, and universally, destitute of the qualifications even of reading and writing. A great proportion of the teachers themselves could neither read nor write."

That was the state of things in education in Canada when Canada was found fit for self-government. Now much is said about the existence of different castes in India. But these are not found only in India. Englishmen may now laugh at our castes and urge them as a sign of our unfitness for representative government, but they forget that hardly two centuries ago, Macaulay says in his History of England, they had so many sects among them that when a census was taken, the population was reckoned only by sects, in religion and politics. Many of our readers must have read how the King of Brobdingnag laughed at Gulliver's arithmetic when the latter told him that the numbers of the English people in his country were counted by counting the people in different sects.

"Again so late as 1877 in England the numbers of all Churches and Chapels of the various dissenting religious denominations was according to the 38th annual report of the Registrar General issued in that year *no less than 122.*"

Now, with regard to the North American Colonies, I draw attention to this because here it is alleged that we have communal strifes. But there it is said about North America:

"Fire and water are not more heterogeneous than the different colonies in North America."

Now, about Canada, Bourinot says:

"At the present time the records and statutes of the Dominion are always given in two languages, French and English, and the same is true of all motions put by the speaker.....In the Legislature of the province of Quebec, French has almost excluded English.....In the Supreme Court of the Dominion, the arguments may be in French and the two Quebec judges give their decisions in their own tongue .....In the country in some remote communities English is never spoken and is understood only by the coue or notary. "

In South Africa also we know that the business of the law is carried on in two languages. So the multiplicity of languages cannot be a bar to our aspiration for self-government.

Speaking about the United States, Lecky says :

" Twenty-one years before New York fell into the hands of the English it was computed that not less than eighteen languages were spoken in or near the town.

Now, I will read one passage from Lord Bryce :

" Though it is usually assumed in platform speeches that the audience addressed are citizens of the attractive type, everybody knows that in all communities not only in Chicago but even in Liverpool, let us say, or in Lyons or Leipzig, a large proportion of the voters are so indifferent or so ignorant that it is necessary to rouse them, to drill them to bring them up to vote. "

Conditions in India are certainly not much worse. We want our electors to be educated, to go to the poll to exercise their vote, and from the last elections we see that a very large proportion of the voters have exercised their vote. Whether they are educated or not is not the question. Now, supposing they send a wrong man to the Council what happens in regard to responsibility? Sir, after all what is responsibility? Responsibility, I think, is liable to take consequences. That is my meaning of the word. It cannot go beyond that. Responsibility means liability to take the consequences. Now, supposing the voters send a wrong man, a man that they ought not to have sent to the Council, and he gives a wrong vote. After all, what would be the consequence? One in forty, or one in hundred, the consequence could not be very great. But when people could not send their representatives, and even when representatives are sent and the Government has no responsibility, are we not taking the consequences? Have we not got the liability to take the consequences? Who else takes the consequences, if not the Indian people? Who else but the Indian ryot and the elector that really takes the consequences when Government is unrepresentative or irresponsible? Government imposes taxes upon them. They pay them. Government does all sorts of mischief with regard to finance. Who bears the consequences? The poor people bear them!

The Finance Member is not here. Supposing there are wrong consequences from the financial policy, ultimately who takes the consequences? That is my question. The position is not really affected by one wrong man being sent to the Councils. After all, voters will exercise their best judgment and send the right kind of people. What is wanted now is that Government should transfer responsibility to the representatives of the people, and



until they do that, of course responsibility means only power. There is no other meaning of responsibility, and when Government use the word "responsibility" I attach a very funny meaning to it. If I have to say "I want to eat the whole dinner," I say "I must be responsible for eating the whole dinner." That is the state of things as it is. Therefore, the responsibility of Government is absolutely nothing; they are irresponsible and the representatives of the people also are irresponsible. I cannot see where the responsibility at present really lies.

Therefore, the real position is this. We have lost our own native Government, we have lost our independence and, therefore, we must be judged to be unfit for anything ! Because unless we actually reconquer our Government back, we cannot prove our fitness ! That is the position. Here I would just like to read one passage from Bernard Shaw which will throw some light upon the point. It is sometimes urged that India is incapable of self-government as she could not defend herself against foreign invasion. But Mr. George Bernard Shaw has given a crushing reply to this argument in the columns of the *Com-montweal*. He says:

"The truth is all nations have been conquered;" and let this be marked, because this has been said with regard to European nations, not Indian or Eastern nations only. You may brush aside China, you may brush aside Persia, you may brush aside India. But here Mr. Bernard Shaw speaking with regard to European nations says:

"The truth is all nations have been conquered; and all peoples have submitted to tyrannies which would provoke sheep or spaniels to insurrection. I know nothing in the history of India that cannot be paralleled from the histories of Europe. The Pole, whitest, handsomest, most operatically heroic of Europeans, has eaten dirt in

the East, as the equally romantic Irishman has in the West."

I beg pardon if there are any Irishmen here, because we bear them good company, I say in all humility.

"I know nothing in this history of India that cannot be paralled from the history of Europe.... Germany has given such exhibitions of helpless political disintegration accompanied by every atrocity or internecine warfare as India at her worst can never hope to surpass. If India is incapable of self-government all nations are incapable of it, for the evidence of history is the same everywhere."

Now, the best argument on the side of the Government for not transferring self-government to India is that they are the best Government and they are the *de facto Government*. Yesterday we discussed the ratio and the strongest argument was that it was the *de facto ratio*. So the strongest argument in favour of this Government also is that it is the *de facto Government*. but just as I did not accept the ratio because it was the *de facto ratio*, I am not going to accept this Government, because it is the *de facto Government*.

I want a change in this Government, I want a modification in this Government, and strictly according to the change in the times.

I will conclude with one remark. It is often said that India must submit to the present rule because she is protected by England. I deny that India is protected by England for the sake of India. I assert that England protects India because it is the brightest gem in her diadem. If she loses India she loses the Empire, therefore, she is protecting India for the sake of the Empire. Nobody, therefore, need ask why India is being protected by England and say "therefore, be satisfied with the present form of Government and do not hanker after self-government.

England has done so much for you, therefore, out of gratitude you must submit to the existing state of things and not self-government."

Now I am going to pay a compliment to the Irish people by quoting one of their best men, Grattan,

(*An Honourable Member* ; "Bernard Shaw is an Irishman").

I will conclude by what he said about gratitude. He said, gratitude is all right. It is human to be grateful; but he said "no man need be grateful at the sacrifice of his self-respect, no woman need be grateful at the sacrifice of her chastity and no nation need be grateful at the sacrifice of her political liberty." (9-3-1927)

## Gold Coinage

Sir, I move the amendment that stands in my name.

"That after clause 1 of the Bill the following new clause be inserted and the subsequent clauses be renumbered accordingly :

- 2 In the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, after Section 3 the following new section shall be inserted and the subsequent sections shall be renumbered accordingly :

### *Gold Coinage*

- (1) The mint shall coin a gold Mohur containing 123·27447 grains troy of gold 11·12ths fine.
- (2) Any person who tenders at any time to the Governor-General-in Council, at the office of the Master of the Mint or at any Government Treasury or the Imperial Bank or any of its branches or at any other place notified in this behalf by the Governor-General

ral-in-Council in the Gazette of India, fine gold and pays seigniorage to cover minting charges, according to a scale to be notified in the Government Gazette, shall be entitled to receive gold Mohurs proportionate to the amount of gold tendered, at the rate of  $13.22 \times 8.47512 = 113.00016$  grains of fine gold per Mohur.

- (3) The gold Mohur shall be a full legal tender in payment or on account, provided that the coin (a) has not lost in weight so as to be more than .05 per cent, below the standard weight and (b) has not been defaced.
- (4) In making of the gold Mohur, a remedy shall be allowed of an amount not exceeding 5,000ths in weight and 2,000ths in fitness.

Provided that the above positions shall not come into operation until such date as the Governor-General-in-Council may direct in this behalf.

Provided also that such date shall not be later than 1st March, 1928. "

Sir, I wish to make it clear absolutely in the first place that this amendment is meant only to bear on the merits of the whole question, and it is not in any sense a dilatory amendment. *I do not wish to prolong the debate for one minute more than is absolutely necessary.* But one cannot avoid bringing forward such an amendment, especially when one sees that during the last two or three days during which we debated this Bill, not a single point was taken about the real issue which in my opinion dominates the whole situation, namely, that of a gold standard and a gold currency. Of course the ratio was the first point to be taken up, and we have now decided that; but I mean this amendment to be the earliest protest against the other parts of the Report and of the Bill. We all know that

the Commission's Report, apart from recommending a ratio of 1s. 6d., harms this country in its currency position in a number of ways. In the first place, it strikes at convertibility of currency notes; then it demonetises gold, the existing gold coin, that is, the sovereign; and thirdly, it strikes at the root of the future hope of gold coinage.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* : I do not know whether the Honourable Member would excuse me, but I would like to point out to him that this Bill does not have any of the consequences that he suggests. This is an entirely interim Bill and all the points he is raising come up on the Gold Standard Bill. In the intention of the Government, there is nothing in this Bill whatsoever to prejudice the later discussion of the whole alternative of the gold currency which he is desiring to move on this Bill.

*Mr. N. C. Kellar* : I am quite aware, Sir, that we are going to have another Bill dealing with the bank, and that we may take up those questions along with the Bank Bill. But I really do not know whether we can rely upon anything like that, and we must, therefore, take the earliest opportunity to put forward the public view on this whole question immediately. Now, the Honourable Finance Member refers me to the future occasion, but I am not quite sure what position he himself would take when that time arrives. And for this reason. We are told in the Statement of Objects and Reasons that this Bill is intended to carry out the recommendations of the Report of the Currency Commission. Now, the Currency Commission's Report gives this Government two options in dealing with gold, gold exchange or gold. May I ask the Honourable Member why he has dropped that recommendation about giving gold and accepted only the recommendation to give gold exchange? That is obviously a departure from the Currency Commission's Report, and, therefore, I cannot

trust him, if I may say so, to carry out the other recommendations also of the Currency Commission's Report when that other Bill comes up.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* :—The other Bill is there, Sir, and contains the Currency Commission's recommendations.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* :—I think the Honourable Member at any rate admits that he has made one departure. Whereas two options were given to him, he has chosen to exercise only one option.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* :—Only during the temporary period.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* :—Never mind; it may be temporary, but he need not have done it. What was to be lost if he had postponed that proposal up to the time of the disposal of the Bank Bill? Why does he anticipate things like that? Where was the need for hurry of that kind? If that other Bill was coming, the whole contents of the Currency Commission's Report should have awaited the coming of that Bill. There was absolutely no hurry, not even including the coming ratio position. We could have disposed of the Ratio Bill and the other contents of the Commission's Report along with that other Bill. They are "twin Bills" of three, I suppose.

Now, this Bill, for the reason that I have pointed out, does not better the position in any way. It has not acted as a shock-absorber. It has provoked a shock in the sense that the Finance Member has made a deliberate departure and given up gold and, kept only exchange. Now, we, the unsophisticated Indian minds, had large expectations, that as a Commission was appointed with very large terms of reference, the whole position was to be examined and investigated into. The whole world was taking to gold standard, and we naturally expected,

that as India was legitimately entitled to a lot of gold—and it was alleged that it had already a lot of gold in the country—we should be also led along the proper path immediately to the stabilisation of the rupee in relation to gold, in other words, that we should have a true, honest gold standard and gold currency. I am expressing the sentiments of the public so far as I can judge them when I use the words “legitimate expectation of the Indian people.” The Honourable Member will realise the truth of what I say if he refers to the evidence that was laid before the Commission, and the evidence will bear out my statement that the Indian public did expect that we should be immediately led to a gold standard and gold currency. Far from doing so, the Honourable Finance Member now actually proposes to demonetise the gold coin. I really wonder what harm this innocent gold coin was doing to him. I have read the reasons which have been adduced for demonetisation, but I am not satisfied with those reasons. If the ratio was to be changed, the new coin would have remained current at that new ratio. He, therefore, should have simply put in a clause in this Bill making the sovereign current not at the rate of Rs. 10 but at the ratio which he proposed as the exchange ratio. Therefore, I call this unnecessary, if not indecent, hurry to demonetise the only good coin that was current in the country.

My amendment and the other amendments bearing on this question, I take it, are intended to lay before this House the whole scheme that we have in our mind, i. e. the popular side has in its mind, with regard to the gold coin and currency. First of all, therefore, I will just give a brief explanation and justification of the amendment I am moving. As you will see, Sir, the amendment though it is a long amendment, proposes, in brief, to introduce a gold coin called the Mohur, which should be minted in

Bombay, have certain weight, a certain fineness of metal and be legal tender. The gold Mohur is a coin with which India was not unfamiliar. If you refer to the economic history of India you will find that gold Mohur has existed from time immemorial, and we know of the gold Mohur at least from the time of Akbar. India was, therefore, familiar with gold Mohurs, coins of this denomination and character, over two or three hundred years, if not more. India has been described in books of exploring travellers as the land of gold, "land in which there was smoke of gold." I do not know really whether there was any smoke of gold, but I think the description to mean that gold coin was current in India, and the principal thing that attracted the attention of foreigners in India was the gold coin. That is the tradition, the heredity of practice and psychology of the Indian people in this matter of coinage.

Then the next thing I may point out in regard to this Mohur is that in order to avoid all sorts of complications, I have endeavoured to fix up the conditions of this Mohur on a par with the sovereign. Personally I would have liked to have had the sovereign itself minted in India. There are a number of opinions about this, whether the Mohur alone should be minted or the sovereign should be minted. Personally I would have had a coin which would be current practically in England and in India. In the Colonies we know for instance that they have their own mint which is a branch of the Royal Mint in England, and sovereigns are coined there. I do not see why India should not have a mint of its own and coin sovereigns which would be current. But I know from official papers that the Home Government has always been making trouble about this. Here again we see preferential treatment. The Colonies are allowed to have branches of the Royal



Mint. India is obstructed in the possession of a branch of the Royal Mint, and in order that the same complication may not arise, and in order that it may not be said that this provision is useless because the Home Government are not going to allow a branch of the Royal Mint to be opened in India, I have made this provision. In order to avoid all complications, I have made the provision that, whereas the Mohur should not be exactly the sovereign, it should be something just like a sovereign. Therefore, I have provided that it should have the same fineness, the same weight etc., that it should not be a counterfeit of the sovereign but it certainly should become a counterpart of the sovereign, so that if people take the two coins in their hands they may see that here in India is a current coin on the same level as the sovereign. And why not the sovereign itself? Simply because the Royal Mint in England is jealous of India, and the people of England are jealous of India and do not want India to handle a gold coin. I want to make that out, and in order to make that out, I have followed the conditions exactly as they appertain to the sovereign. And when is this to be brought into practice? I know that in 1918 Government passed an emergency measure and they did actually coin lakhs and lakhs of gold coin at the Bombay Mint. It cannot, therefore, be said that India does not possess the necessary equipment for gold coinage. In fact in 1918 the Bombay Mint coined, I read in the *Times of India*, about 36 lakhs of gold coins. From that I presume the Bombay Mint is sufficiently well equipped, if we simply decide now to go on minting a gold coin at the Bombay Mint. I read the other day a report of the Master of the Mint. I see there is a full establishment there at present. Silver coinage is stopped: not one rupee was coined last year in this mint, and not one gold coin was minted at this mint last

year, and what are they minting there ? Two anna pieces and four-anna pieces, that is all, and striking some medals etc. I really wanted to inquire of the Finance Member, by putting a question and asking what this big establishment was doing in the mint, if it was not to coin rupees, or if it is not to coin gold mohurs. Was this establishment there only for striking medals and rendering service to outsiders ? What is the mint intended for ? That is a point of curiosity, and some day I suppose it will be satisfied. In the meanwhile, I only assert that this Bombay Mint has all the equipment that is necessary, and the dies and punches which were used in 1918 must also be there; the whole establishment is there, the building is there; absolutely nothing is required, only the permission of Government to allow gold to be minted. There comes the question of the material of which the Mohur is to be minted. (At this point Mr. President vacated the Chair, which was occupied by Mr. K. C. Neogi, one of the Panel of Chairmen). With regard to this, the argument is that if we at once begin to impose an obligation on Government to mint an Indian gold coin and take away the character of legal tender from rupees, then naturally all the rupees will go to the mint in course of time and Government will be called upon to provide themselves with large stocks and supplies of gold, and this would be impossible. Taking that difficulty into account and proceeding on the lines of least resistance and in order to avoid all complications and in fact wanting to probe the *bond fide* of this Government to its fullest depths, I have laid down this, that the gold coin should be given in exchange for a fine gold which a man takes to the mint. So, there would be no difficulty for the Government about gold supplies and gold stocks. A man takes his own gold to the mint, and then again I have provided that he pays his own seigniorage

which Government should not demand. After all seigniorage is a small trifle. In other countries seigniorage is not charged; in most countries it is derogatory to the mint to ask for the expenses of coining. But in order that it may not be said that my amendment is out of order because it lays a certain charge on the Government to the extent of the minting charges, therefore, I have avoided that also. So I offer my own gold and I offer my own expenses of seigniorage, and in return I want a gold coin stamped with the Government stamp. That is the utmost that I ask. Now what is there in this that Government should resist unless they are actuated by a desire to demonetise all gold coins, the reason for which really I cannot understand?

Now, what will be the advantages of this coin of mine? I will place these advantages *seriatim* before the House. The proposal can be carried out almost immediately; yet I have added a proviso so that it cannot be said that Government has been hurried in this matter—I give one full year to Government. I have provided this of course in case it cannot be done immediately. It can be done only by a notification of the Governor General-in-Council and I give one full year, so that that notification may be delayed till March next year. I think one full year is absolutely sufficient time for the Government to begin minting if they really want to begin minting at all. The mint has got the equipment to coin, as I have already said, and can be fitted to do so again within a short space of time. The Mint Master's report shows that the mint has an enormous capacity for minting gold coins; and my proposal, if accepted would not cause any difficulty in carrying it out. The proposal does not depend on the permission of the Royal Mint because the coin I propose is not like the sovereign in shape or form. The gold Mohur will be a counterpart of the sovereign, and yet it will be

so like the sovereign that it will be treated with the same consideration as the sovereign for internal use. The gold coin will familiarise people with the use of gold coins if they are not already trained to them. The actual use of gold coins at least for some time is the only way to get over the habit of that use, because, familiarity with gold coins will increase the confidence of the people in the country's currency system. As a matter of fact, the Indian people do not want any training in gold coins because India possessed gold coins for ages past. The proposed gold coin does not upset the Government scheme in the least degree or manner. It does not interfere with the building up of a gold reserve if Government want to build up one; and the minting of gold coins from bullion does not drive the Government to borrow for currency purposes. It will cost nothing to the Government because, according to the proposal itself, seigniorage will be paid. Of course Government should not, in this country, as in other countries, charge seigniorage because after all minting expenses are negligible. Government may charge seigniorage in the beginning but gradually dispense with it. Action in this matter is left to the Executive and not proposed to be taken by law. Minting facilities will induce the hoarded gold of India to come out and circulate. Gold coins are always likely to circulate more than chips or odds and ends of gold pieces. In the proposed coin people will have a fully valued and full-bodied coin in hand. The gold reserve will be a bulwork of strength to Government; and gold coins in the hands of the people will be a welcome provision for them against a rainy day and days of panic. The use of gold coins will help the progress of the banking habit better than currency notes. The prevalence of gold coins in the country will at least put to the test and verify the doubt whether people really do want a gold

These in brief are the advantages which I think will result necessarily from the adoption of the amendment I am proposing, namely, the minting of gold Mohurs in the Government mint; and after stating these advantages I will enter upon a discussion of the general reasons which led me to propose this course. Now, in this matter I must proceed with diffidence and hesitation because I am an ignorant layman and nobody in this House wishes to put his knowledge of these matters against the great knowledge of the great expert who is the present Finance Member. But I got some consolation in my desire to criticise him from a pamphlet which I read the other day and in which I found Mr. Churchill and his advisers criticised by Professor Keynes. This is the direct language used by him about Mr. Churchill:

"Why did he do such a silly thing?"

That is the language used about the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"Partly, because he has no instinctive judgment to prevent him from making mistakes, partly because lacking this instinctive judgment, he was deafened by the clamorous voices of conventional finance, and most of all because he was gravely misled by his experts."

Now, that brings me on to the recent experience we have gained about experts in Bombay. I am speaking of course of the Back Bay experts, and I think that if the experts who advise the Bombay-Back-Bay scheme, which so egregiously failed, had any sense of self-respect, they would wish themselves to be buried at the bottom of the sea which they wanted to reclaim. Now, what were the motives of the Honourable the Finance Member in appointing this Commission? It is now common knowledge that Government had already made up their mind between the Home Government and themselves to have the ratio

fixed at 1s. 6d. Then where was the necessity for appointing this Commission? By an executive order you could have fixed the ratio at 1s. 6d., and there would have been no necessity of a Royal Commission. It appears, however, that experts sometimes regard themselves as fallible. Experts are not infallible, that is of course our contention. But it is some consolation to find that sometimes experts themselves pretend not to be infallible and, therefore, express their anxiety to appoint Commissions and Committees just to take advice and follow their instructions as far as possible. In this particular instance, however, I must say this, that I do not see any vestige of real modesty on the part of the Finance Member in appointing this Commission. Why I say that is this. When I see sometimes in the street a healthy, able-bodied beggar with crutches under his arms, I ask myself, why has this healthy and stout man crutches under his arms, and whether he really wants any support for working? Certainly not; but then I feel that he wants to beat somebody with them. That is my explanation for the appointment of this Commission. I do not honestly think that the Finance Member really wanted to seek guidance from the report of this Commission, nor did he honestly think that these people were wiser than himself. Certainly at any rate the Indian section did not think so. Then why did he appoint this Commission and why did he appoint Indian members? Perhaps as crutches to beat his opponents with, and not as support to himself? But after all these crutches are rickety; they are very weak, and if the Finance Member indulged in the hope that he would be able to beat us with those sticks, I may assure him that it was a forlorn hope. (*An Honourable Member: "He has beaten us." Another Honourable Member: "Time, time."*) I am going to take a full hour, mind

you. Don't say time. I say this seriously, because I treat this question as the most important topic in the whole Bill. The ratio of course had its own importance, but throughout the discussion, the House will remember that this topic was not touched upon at all. It remained untreated in the aggregate, and, therefore, I am taking this early opportunity to deal with the whole question in such manner as I like, and I hope (though of course there is no time-limit), that the Chair will show me sympathy in this matter and that the House will also show me its indulgence. If I say one irrelevant word, of course the Chair can rule me out, but I am confident that throughout this debate, I shall not say one single word which will be irrelevant or irreverent. As I said, the Finance Member himself is a great expert, but we know that experts are also at times tyrants especially when they happen to be official experts, and it becomes, therefore, necessary to temper their expert tyranny with the grace and mercy of common sense, and I think I stand here as a man representing the man in the street and giving to him what I think to be the popular opinion on the question as against the expert. My opinion may have no use, but I contend, Sir, that these currency matters are after all not a mere matter of expert knowledge. I may remind the Finance Member himself of what he said in his evidence and elsewhere, that it is a matter of psychology, and psychology of course is not expert knowledge. Psychology and expert knowledge are two different things; and I am glad that he recognises that in questions like this there is such a thing as psychology. Now, when I speak of psychology, there can be two psychologies, the psychology of the Indian people and the psychology of the British people, and we have got to look at the question from both points of view. But one thing I am going to do in this debate, and that deliberately. I

about this Commission which is a crushing reply to this. You may treat our Indian professors as mere theorists who do not know anything about this question. But I have read that when the Report of this Commission came for discussion before the Royal Society of Arts, then Sir Charles Addis gave it as his opinion in the open meeting that he could not get away from the impression that the whole report was merely theoretical. Now, Sir, if our professors are to be disregarded simply because they are theorists, then here is a great expert, Sir Addis, who condemns practically the whole Report of the Commission as a purely theoretical report. I go further and say this. I am prepared to have a game of forfeits with the Finance Member if he will sit down and play the game with me in the Indian fashion. He may put forward one authority, I will put forward another authority. He may put forward a theorist, I will meet him by putting forward a theorist; he may put forward a professor. I will also put forward a professor; he may put forward a banker, and I will also put forward a banker. In that way the game should proceed, and if I can cite a larger number of witnesses, then he should acknowledge that what I am saying has sufficient justification behind it. Of course, I do not think that the Finance Member will be ready to play that game with me. But in order to strengthen my case, as I have already said, I am not going to rely upon the testimony of Indian witnesses at all in this matter, because, according to the Finance Member, they are all ignorant people and do not know anything about these matters. I really do not see why he should make that sort of presumption, because among these 93 witnesses, there are professors, bankers, tradesmen, and merchants, who are all men of affairs. So why should it be assumed that all these people do not know anything and the Finance Mem-



ber alone and the three Indian Members on the Commission, his supporters, know everything about currency matters? To illustrate what I say, I will quote the opinions of two English professors, two great professors, who may well be described as rivals even of Keynes if necessary. First I will quote the testimony of Professor Gregory and Professor Cannan. I am referring to Professor Gregory only in so far as he allows this question to be decided ultimately strictly with reference to Indian sentiment. He says that if India wants it she must have it. But the testimony of Professor Cannan goes much further. About Professor Cannan I may say this, that he is Professor of Economics in the London University—I think he is a Professor in London University—and his testimony must carry great weight. This is what he says:

"Opinion in India cannot be disregarded. So far as I can judge, the opinion of those who take any interest in the subject in India is overwhelmingly in favour of a gold-currency standard."

He does not mean only Indians but all those who take an interest in Indian affairs. These, he says, are in favour of a gold currency :

"Probably this is very largely a matter of national sentiment, the feeling being that Western nations adopted gold currencies in their own interests, and that India is prevented from following their example by the influence of London financial circles upon the British Government. To argue that India is too poor and backward to make good use of gold is very naturally regarded as adding insult to injury. It is extremely desirable in the general interests of India that a grievance of this kind should be removed at the earliest possible date, even if its removal costs an appreciable amount of money."

And then, what he says further on is perhaps even more interesting, because he practically rationalises his proposal that India should have a gold currency and he in a way answers the objection that there are insuperable difficulties in the way on account of the scarcity of gold supply. This is what he says:

"The interest of Great Britain and the West generally is that India should be prosperous and well satisfied, and to secure this Great Britain might well be contented to incur some inconvenience, especially when the inconvenience would not be peculiar to herself, but would be shared by most of the Western countries. But it seems more likely that the gold standard countries would be benefited than that they would be inconvenienced by the introduction of a gold-currency system in India. The production of gold is likely to remain high for a considerable period yet."

These are his arguments for supposing that this gold supply is not a difficulty in the way.

"The European and American demand for additional gold currency is not likely to be as great as before the war, since people who have once become accustomed to paper currency do not wish to return to gold coins and the superstition that immense cellarsful of eternally idle gold are necessary to "back" or "support" the value of paper currencies is, like other superstitions, losing strength. Consequently, if the East takes no more gold than before, there is great danger of a further depreciation of gold, and, which of course is the same thing, a further rise of prices in the gold standard countries. It is true that rise of prices makes things temporarily easy for the businessman who lives by profits, but all experience goes to show that it tends towards general unrest and the spread of revolutionary and destructive ideas, that it ruins

in a philosophical way, for I have an inward scepticism as to the permanent success of this decision. During the War we know that European nations and Western nations generally used some very crude methods of stabilising the ratio. But the ratio is such an obstinate mule that it will never stabilise itself, that it will never allow itself to be stabilised. And here I will read just a few lines from another professor, an eminent professor who was specially called from America to lecture in England. He says :

' Regulation of exchanges, then, if the principles enunciated in the present chapter are sound can best be achieved by establishing conditions under which exchanges will be self-regulating in accordance with the principle which was expressed by the former Russian Minister of Finance, M. Witte. He is reported to have said: 'A regulation of exchanges is not something which is established; it establishes itself, otherwise it is incapable of establishment. The rendering of the foreign phrase is by no means satisfactory, but it may serve. One might render it more freely perhaps by saying that what he intended to imply was that statesmen do not control exchanges—they are concerned with establishing conditions under which exchanges can control themselves."

Now, when I said that Western nations adopted crude methods of stabilising exchange, I may just mention these. For instance, they put a restraint upon the movement of exchanges. They tried to centralise foreign exchange businesses in the hands of certain institutions specially named for the purpose. Then they put restraints upon speculation in the country. A similar restraint was also put upon the publication of the current rates of exchange. They also visited with punishment, as in Italy, any person who dared to ignore the decree according to which an official exchange rate was announced, and anybody who

deviated from that exchange ratio and did any transaction was to be punished. These are instances of the crude methods adopted by them. But what happens in India is this. Not any one of these crude methods are followed, but we know that Government have in their hands a number of other methods by which they have tried to stabilise and if left to themselves they will try to stabilise this exchange. They are in possession of Council Bills which they may use to any large extent. They have the power to issue Reverse Councils. Then they can inflate or deflate according to their convenience and will. They can also try to control prices and there is the statutory fixation of the ratio. Now the question really is whether Government are going to succeed in stabilising the ratio by these methods. In my opinion that ratio will not be stabilised. I partly agreed with my friend Pandit Motilal Nehru when he said that after all there was such a thing as a natural ratio, and paradoxical as it may seem, a natural ratio is a fluctuating ratio and not a fixed ratio; for after all it must be the exact equation between the value of the national currency and the value of the international standard. Whenever these two meet then of course the exchange is stabilised. Now there are two parties to this exchange, those who benefit and those who lose by exchange operations. So far as Government are concerned, I have already said that they possess those various powers which they can use according to their own sweet will and pleasure. They remind me of the magic mushroom in 'Alice in Wonderland.' If you eat one end you get so short that your chin nearly touches your feet, and if you eat the other end you become as tall as an American sky-scraper. The Government use these methods like this magic mushroom; they can wield all these powers and inflate or deflate at will. But what have the poor people got in their

hands to control these exchange operations in their own way ? It has been established by a consensus of learned men in these matters that a gold currency is the one thing which in the hands of the people affords them a ready means of affecting the exchange to a certain extent. In regard to this I will just quote one authority, Mr. Webb, who gave evidence before the Currency Commission. He is asked :

*" Taking the first point, I do not quite follow your meaning when you say that it would facilitate the automatic regulation of exchange. ... "*

Namely, keeping gold currency in the hands of the people.

*" In what way would it do that ? "*

The answer is:

*" It would enable the public at all times to present gold for conversion into sovereigns whenever they required them, and would, therefore, give them other means of putting themselves in funds in cash than at present exist. "*

So the possession of gold currency is a means by which the people can affect the situation brought about by the whims of currency. For here they have coins in their hands which they can use and thus affect the currency position. I have just said that I would not quote any Indian authority, but I will make an exception here and quote the authority of Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, for I want the House to know what he himself has said before that Commission. Mr. Bhupendra Nath Mitra—I think it was the same gentleman—said in the course of his examination by the Chairman of the Commission:

*" I think myself that we ought to have a gold mint. The main reason is..... "*

And this is my point. He has given a reason.

*" The main reason is that we ought to have some mints coining a gold coin in India. It would help us*

" Q. Do you, therefore, think that it will be a fair conclusion to make that, if gold was fairly easily available at the various Government treasuries, people may have hoarded less gold ?

A. I think I have answered that really already in my broad statement that I am personally convinced that the easy availability of gold and the convertibility of the rupee into gold will after a certain interval have a very strong effect in reducing the tendency to hoard."

(*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* · "Hear, hear".)

" Q. I was trying to get at what is called the appetite of the people, of the masses, for hoarding gold as they get some surplus. I want to know whether in order to remedy that so-called tendency of the Indian people, the introduction of a gold currency would not directly show to the people that they can really get gold whenever they want and, therefore, they need not hoard it.

A. Yes. I think it might be theoretically possible so to educate the people of India as to make them realize that their rupee note under the sterling exchange standard was so absolutely convertible for practical purposes into gold, that their fears and attempts to hoard anything might disappear. I do believe that after a short time when the Indian people had discovered that they could get gold for currency without limit, there would be a considerable tendency, instead of hoarding, to invest."

(*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* · "Hear, hear".)

I would like, however, in this connection to refer to one point that appears in his evidence somewhere. He has stated his opinion that India should be given a gold coin if she wants to play with it. If she wants to play with it, she may have that gold coin. In this connection I would say two things. If he considers the Indian people as grown-up people able to think soundly for themselves

then he should have some regard for their judgment and opinion. If, on the other hand, he really takes the Indian people to be children, may I not ask that he should at least show affectionate indulgence for the Indian people and give them a gold coin ?

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett*: The Honourable Member, I think, is entirely misquoting me, but I will answer later.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar*: Whether we are treated as grown up men or children, I think we are entitled to have a gold currency and immediate proposals for gold currency at the hands of the Finance Member.

*Sir Darcy Lindsay*: (Bengal European): May I point out to the Honourable Member that the time-limit he fixed for himself, one hour, has been exceeded ?

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar*: I never promised that I would finish within that time. The House knows that I am not a great speaker. I never take the time of the House, but in this matter I am determined that I shall use to the fullest limit the privilege of no time-limit and put the whole case before this House. If anybody does not wish to hear me, he had better go out. The Chair is good enough company for me in this matter. I want the whole view brought on record, whether I am listened to or not, because after all record will be the chief thing. Well, what is at the back of the psychology of the Indian people ? I have said this, that Indian people are really anxious to have a gold currency, and what is the reason therefor ? The reason in the first place is this, that people have lost faith in the present currency policy. They think that the Indian currency policy is neither fool-proof, much less villain-proof. I do say that in the opinion of the Indian people the official currency policy is neither fool-proof, much less villain-proof. The present Finance

Member may be a very great expert, but in his predecessor we had a man who committed Himalayan blunders and mistakes. What guarantee is there that he will not be succeeded by a man who will commit similar blunders and mistakes? Therefore, it is the privilege of India to ask that she should have something in her own hand which will enable her to regulate exchange and to get relief from currency muddles. Indian people have not much faith in the currency note. Of course that is quite fair. The currency note does not make any pretensions but says "I am a mere paper currency note; you may keep your trust in me or you may not, as you like." Then what about the rupee? Even the rupee is a debased coin and in that connection I will read to the House just a small paragraph, which will, I think, interest the House. I am referring to Professor Robertson's book on money. It is an imaginary conversation about a Bradbury note and the Indian rupee. The Bradbury note, after he has been rebuked for not being very useful and so on, says:

"And let me tell you this, it's not only we paper standard pieces, of whom that's true. There is my friend the rupee, who is the standard coin of India; he looks very smart and solid, and takes a lot of people in; but if you took his lettering off him, his carcass would come tumbling down in value. For it isn't his flesh that gives him the value he has got, it is the writing on him."

That I suppose will give the right reason why even the Indian rupee is disturbed. These two are the factors in our currency system, the paper currency and the rupee; and both are distrusted because they have absolutely no international value. It is said, why should India hanker so much for this convertibility of the paper currency into this silver rupee and of the silver rupee into gold? Why are people hankering for this convertibility? About that I



would just read two sentences from Professor Robertson, and these references I make because the House will find that these ideas are very happily and pithily put. He says :

“ Nowadays it seems to be generally agreed that even if the Bradbury note became freely and indubitably convertible, there would be no frantic rush to convert it for the purpose of making ordinary payments within the country. The mere assurance of convertibility, it is thought, would have the same kind of soothing effect as church bells in the distance, and be equally unprovocative of action. ”

The point is that if you give gold currency to the people, still it is not impossible that the people should be taught to use gold economically and ultimately to resort to the system of paper currency and to the system of doing financial transactions by cheques. But that India can learn in course of time. The only issue between the Finance Member and ourselves on this side of the House is this. It is a good ideal to economise gold, but, can you really achieve that ideal fully without putting India's people through the regular paces for acquiring that habit in the course of time ? Your Bank Act was passed in 1925. It means only two years ago, and what were you like before ? I would just like to tell the House that this accusation against India of the habit of hoarding gold and wishing to possess gold is absolutely useless. India has been accused by many of an inordinate, an unreasonable love of gold. In this matter, I may join issue at once. India is ridiculed for using gold in medicines. I wonder whether the people in England think India's people eat gold actually. But I can say this that far more gold is used for dental surgery and other purposes in England than we use here for medicines. Of that I am certain. I adopt the very familiar *tu*

*quoque* argument and ask whether England and other European countries have themselves yet completely shed their own love of gold? Gold is still the ruling monarch of metals. It is not India alone that has fallen under its sway, for the simple reason that gold means and spells power, and in this respect let us not have short memories. It is certainly not a far off cry to the pre-war period, and what is it that we find about England and European countries before the War? The War has no doubt changed the outlook of some of those countries, and on the principle of once bit twice shy, some of them have been energetically endeavouring to eliminate gold from common currency. That does not mean, however, that they have permanently given up their love of gold. The latest mania is perhaps that of accumulation of gold in the bank reserves, and I can fancy that the world financiers are looking forward to the time when all the gold in the world would be concentrated in New York, London and perhaps one or two central reserve banks. That accomplished, the world will easily be at the mercy of these financiers, who may then play with the world in return as you do with a football. Woe betide the day when that happens, and I for one cannot contemplate with equanimity the prospect of another set of chains being tied round the feet of this country. The chains in this case will indeed be chains of gold, but they will be chains all the same.

Complacent advisers ask us to look at and profit by the example of those countries in which since the War credit has supplanted the yellow metal. We are shown the Bank Act of England of 1925 which gives the Bank alone the undivided right of dealing in gold and gold coin, and removing the metal from the path of the common man in England, as economic rubbish or nuisance. But I have read the opinions of some economists who believe that this

benevolent embargo upon gold cannot last long. Professor Flux of America thinks that "time will come soon again when perfect convertibility will be established and specie payments will again be resumed," in some European countries. He also is of opinion that many of the European countries will rather choose, instead of facing a further considerable change in domestic price levels, to re-establish gold convertibility on some new parity. Who knows that the flood gates of gold-reserve in the world may not again be opened, and England too may not like to reintroduce her gold-currency? Professor Keynes said a plethora of gold is as embarrassing as a shortage of gold. The Right Honourable R. M'Kenna has made a speculation that America may soon find her gold an encumbrance after the War, as Sweden and Norway found it in the War, and actually prevented its import. Mr. M'Kenna estimated that in the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States there was already an excess of upwards of three millions of gold over legal requirements. India, therefore, need not despair of getting gold. But thanks to the Finance Member, India will be lagging behind other countries in point of gold currency. How long is India thus to be made the fool of the world, so that she should always be the hindmost in the race? And we know the saying that the devil takes the hindmost. Of course when the whole world will be reformed, when its economic psychology will change, and when it will begin to despise gold in the true Diogenese fashion, India may also join in the chorus. It is said that under the law of Lycurgus the police used diligently to inquire among the citizens whether they possessed gold, and the possessor, when caught, was punished according to law. And why should we not imagine that a day may dawn when the Assembly at Delhi will be called upon to pass a similar prohibitive law for the whole of India against the possession

of gold? But, until that time why not allow India to cherish and fulfil her desire to possess both gold reserves and gold currency, in the same human fashion as did England before the Act of 1925? Turning to England in particular, what do we find? We find that in the year before the War, England had in her treasuries and in circulation 830 millions of gold sovereigns for a population of 44½ millions, or over 18 gold coins *per capita* of its population. Up to the year 1915 the London mint was coining, according to her needs, about 25 to 30 millions of gold coins every year, and the figure in 1912, that is to say only two years before the War, was the highest on record, namely 30½ million gold coins. Of the total coins minted by the world in 1915, the British Commonwealth and the United States of America were responsible for 75 per cent. We are to suppose that these countries were the foremost in point of development of banking habits and habits of economizing gold currency, and yet the figures just mentioned indicate the actual absorption of gold currency by them every year. It is only during the last 10 years that the use of a gold coin has been at a discount and only two years that it has been under a ban; and we are told by the Finance Member that India must immediately come up to the level of these countries in point of economy of gold coin. Also with regard to the habit of hoarding, I may say in passing that England and the United States were never free from this habit of hoarding *in toto*. Just before the War about 75 millions of gold coins were circulating in Great Britain and evidently much of this must have been kept in small or large hoards by private people. And just as a performing conjurer picks and collects coins from every part of the body of the operating medium, the War brought out an enormous amount of gold coin from the body of the British nation. The great banker Benjamin White observes:

people had not much gold coin to handle. Relying on the Indian Currency Commission's Report, am I to believe that the Indian people have now learnt the habit of hoarding gold? Am I to believe that they have learnt the habit when they could not handle gold? Is it possible that people who could not handle gold will acquire the habit of hoarding it? That is the beauty of the whole situation. A member of the Commission makes a specific admission in 1912 that people have lost the habit of hoarding gold and, therefore, the time is ripe for the Indian Government to go ahead with gold currency. And now in this Commission's Report the same member puts his signature to this charge against the Indian people that they have acquired the habit of hoarding gold. Such is the value of the Commission's Report. That is the stick with which the Finance Member wants to beat us.

Then I will not go into other things here. I can quote Mr. Gillan who also gave his testimony in 1912, and even in Professor Keynes' book you have ample evidence to show that though the habit of hoarding still exists he is not against giving people a gold coin if they want it, because he says that habits are likely to change even by reason of their being given such gold coin to handle. Then there is Sir Samuel Montagu. It would be tedious to read all these passages but any one can verify my references and find out whether I am right or wrong. Besides Sir Samuel Montagu—and the best testimony of course in this matter is that of a banker—there is Sir James Begg, who was a member of the Commission in 1913. He has given very good evidence on this point and he has written, I think, a minute of dissent in which he says, "Go ahead with the gold currency in India."

Now the next point I want to take up is this. The Government of India have adopted this gold currency po-

as a deliberate policy from the year 1893. Now consider what the position was in 1893. There were several options open to Government when the mint was being closed. The options were : pure paper currency and the use of the printing press as a mint; that proposal of course this Government had no reason to accept as some Western countries did adopt. The second was bimetallism; but Government could not come to an agreement with the foreign nations and, therefore, they could not have bimetallism. Therefore, the only course open to them in 1893 was a gold standard and gold currency. They deliberately accepted that proposal, that policy, and went ahead with it, and we can bring up the continuous tradition of the Government of India in this matter from the Fowler Commission up to the year 1922. Then in the year 1922 Sir Vithaldas Thackersay moved his second resolution on gold currency ; and the Finance Member's own predecessor, Sir Malcolm Hailey (I cannot quote his own words, but you can find it in the proceedings) said, " You want a guarantee for establishing a mint in India. Here on the floor of this House I give a guarantee that you can have it as soon as you want it." If that is to be the position, if India is to get a gold mint for minting gold coins, as soon as India wants it, then what is to become of the evidence that I have placed already before this House ? If out of a total of 103 or 104 witnesses, 98 witnesses give testimony in favour of the adoption of gold currency immediately and if only 6 people are against, then what is the inference to be drawn ? When I mentioned this analysis of witnesses, I found one thing on close scrutiny that the cleavage of opinion, the difference of opinion ran along racial lines. Every Indian almost as a rule was in favour of gold currency and every European almost as a rule was against gold currency in India. We know there are exceptions, one

or two exceptions on this side and one or two exceptions on the other side; but these exceptions only go to prove the general rule that the cleavage of opinion even on this matter unfortunately goes along racial lines, the English people saying that India should not be given a gold coin and gold currency and Indian people claiming a gold coin and gold currency, even with the support of the Government of India. What else is the meaning of the scheme which was put before the Commission by Mr. Denning and by Sir Basil Blackett? I am prepared to take them at their word in regard to that scheme. I will just refer to the scheme. The scheme, as I said, brings up the tradition of Government of India pursued for the last 30 or 35 years about establishing a gold mint in India and making gold coins current in India. If anybody thwarted their purpose it was the Home Government and even when in one case the Secretary of State and the Government of India agreed between themselves to have a gold coin in India, it was the British Treasury that came in the way. First of all, there were technical difficulties about qualifications and so on. Then there were legal difficulties and between the two difficulties they prevented India from having a gold coin. In fairness to the Government of India I must say this; from a perusal of official papers I have been absolutely convinced that the Government of India did always intend to establish a gold mint and gold currency in India and they have kept up the tradition. That tradition has been continued even in the present scheme which has been submitted by the Finance Member and by Mr. Denning before the Commission: but there is of course one little thing—in ending in the last paragraph; of course it is stated there—and I can see there must be reason for that—that the question of gold supplies to India must be taken into consideration. I also admit that; but just some

time back I put before this House the view that this difficulty is not an insuperable one if the Government of India really mean to give us a gold mint and a gold coin. There is a plethora of gold in America; and certainly we can come to some arrangement with America for obtaining our gold. I suppose the scheme also mentions that—these two officers have deliberately stated that it is possible to come to some arrangement with America itself for our supplies of gold. Then what about the question of cost? They have said even on that point that we must take our courage in both our hands and go ahead, because they themselves regard that that is the real ultimate solution of this whole problem. It is no use tinkering with the currency problem, to have a little thing here and a little thing there; only if you establish a gold standard and follow it up immediately by a gold currency and open a mint and keep gold free to come in and go out, then you do the right thing with regard to the currency policy, and, as I have previously stated, you give the people some means in their own self-reliant hands to set right the currency policy when it goes wrong. All the great names of Finance Members may be mentioned in this connection as having favoured gold currency, Meston, Fleetwood-Wilson and so on. And I have just quoted Sir Malcolm Hailey. And unless I may presume that he was acting in a dishonest manner, Sir Malcolm Hailey could not have given that explicit assurance and that specific guarantee that as soon as India wanted a gold mint and gold currency India should have it. Now, fortunately this commission has been appointed, evidence has been recorded; and what further proof is required that India does want gold coin and gold currency?

So I would summarise the position thus. Indian sentiment is against the Finance Member. Indian theorists



are against him. His own scheme is against him. His scheme is not as good as the tradition of the Government of India. His evidence is not as good as his scheme. His Bill is not as good as his evidence; and he himself is not as good as his Bill. That in a few words is the real summing up of the position of the present Finance Member. I have before my mind's eye a chart he has automatically drawn about his tendencies in this matter. In the scheme I find him an enthusiastic advocate of gold currency, saying explicitly that the problem cannot be solved unless you do this. At the end of the scheme he puts in a certain sentence raising a small difficulty, but that is not such a large difficulty as to obscure the benevolent purpose of the whole scheme. Then the Commission gives him two options, in the matter of sale and purchase of gold. The Commission recommends two methods, to sell gold or gold exchange, and in the Bill what do we find? He gives the go-by to gold bullion, yet calling that a gold bullion standard, and takes gold exchange. Now what is the effect of this exchange? Can we see the face of gold under this arrangement? If you give your gold exchange, it necessarily amounts—I am open to correction—how will it operate? You will get perhaps—of course people may correct me—a draft say on London or say some foreign country. That will serve your purpose. But so far as India is concerned, you will not see the face of gold. The Commission did recommend that, absolutely without making any condition that it was either for internal or external purposes, gold must be given. But the Finance Member takes upon himself the responsibility of making a departure from that Commission's Report in this case. Now, I ask this House, if the Finance Member is to be permitted to make a departure from the Currency Commission's recommendation, why should not this House be allowed to

make a departure also. The difference will be only this, that his departure would be reactionary, ours would be progressive and in the right direction. Therefore, I am calling upon this House to deliberately make this departure from the Currency Commission's report.

But I will not weary this House. The House, of course, has, I know, been wearied. But I think if the House applies its mind to this one question that this currency problem can be solved only by introducing an honest gold standard and gold currency into this country, then of course the House would not feel tired at the discussion of this question. I shall feel obliged if any Members of this House will point out the flaws in the line of argument I have followed. I will welcome contradictions, I will welcome corrections. But if in the aggregate what I have said is sound, then I think the House will unanimously support me.

(12-3-1927)

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## The Currency Bill

### *Demonetisation of the Sovereign*

Sir, I will not repeat the arguments that have already been adduced by my friend, Mr. Chetty. The first argument that I wish to adduce on this point is this, that off and on the sovereign has been legal tender, that is, for the space of a century, and we are now out according to this proposal to demonetise it and, as I guess, permanently and for ever. To show that the sovereign has been with us for the space of a century, I will just quote a few dates. In 1835, the first attempt was made to demonetise the sovereign but that remained inoperative. The sovereign still abided. In 1841 treasuries were again ordered to receive gold coins at Rs. 15. The sovereign and gold

mohur were of the same weight, fineness, etc., and they remained two parallel coins. In 1855 gold coin was again demonetised as there were large discoveries of gold about that time. In 1864, treasuries were again allowed to receive gold sovereigns at Rs. 10-4 as. per sovereign. And now was the turn of silver to be cheap. In 1878, the Government of India proposed to make sovereigns legal tender but the Secretary of State for India refused to do so. In 1893 the Government of India after the Herschell Commission made the sovereign legal tender at Rs. 15 for the limited purpose of payments to be made to Government. In 1898 the Fowler Commission recommended sovereigns to be made legal tender. From 1898 to 1920 the sovereign was at Rs. 15. From 1920 to 1926, the sovereign was legal tender, but only at Rs. 10. Of course, there was no obligation upon Government to sell sovereigns. And now for the first time there is a proposal to demonetise the sovereign. Then we are on the other hand asking for a gold standard and gold currency. This, I say, is to all appearances, blasting the very hopes which we have been entertaining in our minds. I must make it clear that if I got my mohur, an Indian coin for India, then I would not necessarily have sovereigns; and even when we put different amendments, it should be observed, and it must have been observed, that the different amendments were put for both the gold mohur and the sovereign only for this purpose that, if one was lost, the other might be won. There was no intention at least on my part to ask Government to keep two parallel gold coins in India. But I would certainly insist, I would never cease to insist, that at least one gold coin do remain in India as a current coin and legal tender. Therefore, as I said, these hopes are being blasted; and if there is progress it is progress in the direction of the tail. It is reaction, not progress. The sove-

reigns have remained with us for the space of a century at least, in one of the three conditions, either as full legal tender, or as legal tender so far as payments due to Government were concerned, or at any rate at its bullion value. Now, the advantages of having a sovereign are these. In the first place it is a very popular coin. It is more convenient to export and import sovereigns than gold and to settle payments in sovereigns. Sovereigns again are cheaper to bring from Australia because India happens to be on the way from Australia to England, and, therefore, we can always depend upon the full supply of sovereigns for India. And again, the sovereign is—I say this on good authority—fast becoming an international gold coin *par excellence*, far beyond the bounds of the British Empire; and we are here being deprived of a coin which a great Bombay merchant once described as the cement of the Empire. You are taking away the cement of the Empire.

Now, let us for a moment briefly consider the reasons that have been adduced by the Commission in their Report for demonetising the sovereign. What the Commission suggested was this. Obligation was to be imposed on Government to sell gold bars for all purposes internally. That was the intention of the Commission. That was the argument. When the Commission proposed to demonetise the sovereign it should be remembered, and it is of great importance, that the Commission had in its mind this provision, namely, the obligation upon Government to sell gold both for external as well as internal purposes. What does the Bill do? It cuts at one of the options given by the Commission.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett*: May I interrupt the Honourable Member? The Gold Standard and Reserve Bank Bill exactly fulfils the suggestion of the Currency Commission. If the Honourable Member is referring

to the absence of the word "gold"—"gold or currency"—in clause 5. I may inform him here and now that if he desires to reinsert that, I should have no objection.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* When we come to that.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :* Quite.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* We are coming to that clause now.

My point was that there has been a departure from the original conditions and the Finance Member was, in my opinion, not justified in cutting out the sovereign. Taking the gold bullion and sovereign together, I think it is obvious that from the point of view of convenience, gold coin is much better than gold bullion. I cannot really see how odds and ends of gold or chips that may be given to us by Government, say to-morrow or at the period of maturity, for gold certificates—will be very helpful to the people. People will certainly prefer coins in the place of these bits of gold. The Commission say that there is no inconvenience as the sovereign has been practically already demonetised as the legal value of the sovereign was only Rs. 10. We have raised it to Rs. 13-5-4. If its lower value was an argument against demonetisation that argument has now ceased. Then again, when it was at Rs. 10 you never demonetised it. Why did you not do it? You saw for yourself that it was a useless coin. Nobody would do any transaction with the coin. That was obvious. That was apparent. And yet Government did not take any steps to demonetise the gold coin then. Now that it has risen in value from Rs. 10 to Rs. 13-5-4, you are proceeding to demonetise it. If it remained legal tender at a certain value when the exchange was 2s., certainly there is greater reason that it should be allowed to remain a legal tender when it has risen in value. It has been said again by the Commission that the sovereign is a mere shadow. What is the substance? The gold bul-

lion standard and the gold standard that is coming. When gold convertibility, absolute and even for internal purposes, will be established, then only will the Indian people begin to realise the true basis of the stability of their currency. There is no stability at all for the present. In the meanwhile, the sovereign should be allowed to remain as it is. It will help and not hinder the possibility any more than before of the Indian people realising the true basis of the stability of currency. This basis is gold by admission. Admittedly it is gold. The sovereign whenever seen or handled will be a reminder of the idea of this basis. Why lose it then ? When you want to remind people of this basis of the stability, namely gold, then you had better give them greater opportunities of handling a coin which will remind them now and then of the gold basis of our currency. I have already stated that the sovereign is regarded as something that will bind together the Empire. Also, it has a recognised place in the currency for a long time both in England and in India, and I might say this also, that we on this side, we in India have tried to appreciate the sovereign while Government have tried to depreciate the sovereign. And now when they try to demonetise it, I warn them that it would be economic treason, to eliminate the sovereign from the currency constitution.

( 16-3-1927 )

## II

Sir, I have got two amendments on this clause.

*Mr. President :* The amendment is before the House. If the Honourable Member does not approve of it, he must oppose it. If it is carried his own amendment will fall.

The question I have to put is that this amendment be made. As many as are of that opinion will say "Aye." (*Honourable Members "Aye."*).

*Mr. N. G. Kelkar :* I want to speak, Sir.

*Mr. President :* The Honourable Member must protect his own interests and rise in time.....

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* It is not a question of moving my amendment. I will content myself at this stage.....

*Mr. President :* The Honourable Member will be at liberty to move his amendment, if he could persuade the House to throw out this amendment.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* If this is accepted .....

*Mr. President :* Then his amendment goes.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* Therefore, I must oppose this now and speak on it. Sir, the mover of that other amendment has agreed to withdraw his amendment in consideration of the new form of the clause offered by the Finance Member. But in my opinion the real point at issue has not been solved. I think the real point at issue here is the option, and the question is, who is to exercise that option ? It has all along been assumed that it is the Government that is to exercise that option, whereas, as I understand it, in the interests of the internal stabilization of the rupee the option must be given to the purchaser to exercise. It is for him to say, he wants this, that or the other, and for the Government to grant it, if real stabilization of the rupee is to be secured, which is the object of this Bill. The whole trouble seems to arise out of the fact that, on this Bill, we are taking Government more seriously than they are prepared to take themselves, and that is evidently why the Finance Member says it is a matter of option, but we are not prepared to exercise that option, as if there is nothing in the option. Then he says, it does not matter whether he sells gold, 40 tolas or 300 or any other number of tolas. It is not to be a practical proposition and it does not matter for a few months how much we sell. The Bill has been presented with so many objectionable provisions that we must grapple with each of the provisions, and leave no room for any

prejudice against what is coming in the other Bill. If every problem will be solved at the time of the other Bill, I do not really see why the present Bill should have been brought only a few months before that. All the three Bills should have been taken together and should have been sent to a Select Committee and the whole matter thrashed out. I do not really see how only our amendments and arguments prejudice the final conclusion to be reached and not the provisions put forward by the Government. Opposing the amendment put forward by the Finance Member, I will say this. I will put before the House a kind of formal argument about this. My proposition is that the object of this Bill is immediately to stabilize the rupee in relation to gold. That proposition cannot be gainsaid. The Statement of Objects and Reasons says that the immediate object is the stabilization of the rupee in relation to gold. Now stabilization has two aspects, its internal aspect and its external aspect. The external stabilization has been secured by fixing a statutory ratio of exchange at 1s. 6d. A necessary corollary of this, however, is that the Government should be prepared to work the statutory ratio and this has been done by a statutory obligation imposed on Government to sell gold exchange at 1s. 6d. or 8 point odd grains of gold for one rupee. But the real question now arises—What about the internal stabilization of the rupee in relation to gold? Internal stabilization can only be realised by Government being prepared both to buy and sell gold bullion at the statutory gold value of the rupee. The statutory value of the rupee in relation to gold involves a double idea of stabilization, (1) of the rupee in relation to gold and (2) of gold in relation to the rupee. It is a perfect equation, namely, one rupee is equal to 8 point so many grains of gold, and the two sides of an equation must be interchangeable or convertible. We can say the rupee is linked



to gold only when this equation is realised, not till then. There is no such realisation of the equation so long as the Government recognises only an obligation to buy gold at the rate fixed. By buying gold as a matter of legal obligation Government can be said only to have stabilized gold in relation to the rupee and not the rupee in relation to gold. *To refuse to sell gold for rupees at the same fixed rate would be to deny that the value of the rupee for internal purposes is 8 point so many grains of gold.* The real point was to stabilize the silver rupee. In the statement of Objects and Reasons Government said that they wanted immediately to stabilize the rupee. Their action in refusing to sell gold is, therefore, a direct contradiction of their purpose as stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. If Government do not want to sell gold, they should have stated their object clearly. They should have said "immediate stabilization of the rupee in relation to its exchange value", whereas they have stated in clear terms their object is to immediately stabilize the rupee itself. *For the purpose of exchange this can be accomplished even without a reference to gold bullion.* They should have stated "immediate stabilization of the rupee in relation to its exchange value" and not stabilization in relation to gold, for, as I conceive it, the purpose of exchange can be accomplished even without reference to gold bullion, for example, by bills of exchange or securities or book adjustments. *Gold bullion need not come in here at all; the purpose of exchange can be served otherwise.* Therefore, why should it not be stated that the object of Government is to stabilize the rupee in relation to exchange? But if stabilization in relation to gold is stated that must also be made good. This Bill makes the standard not even a real gold bullion standard as it is supposed to be, but simply a gold exchange standard.....

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* : May I point out to the Honourable Member that what I said was that the object of this Bill is to establish a gold exchange standard for an interim period pending the time the gold bullion standard is brought into effect.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* : We have heard the Bill described for even the present interim stage as a gold bullion standard.

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* : Never.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* : May I take it that that has never been put forward ?

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* : Certainly not by me. I carefully stated the contrary.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* : What does the Statement of Objects and Reasons say ? " To stabilize the rupee in relation to gold," not in relation to exchange.....

*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett* : Certainly.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* :—This in my opinion is even worse than the gold exchange standard; for there under the gold exchange system what do we find ? We had exchange as well as the sovereign as a definite legal tender coin and that means that whereas in the other arrangement we had the cat and the grin together, here we have only the grin and no cat ! The reason given in the Report for the proposed elimination of a gold coin as legal tender is that the obligation was proposed to be imposed on Government, even in the interim period, to sell gold for all purposes. The sovereign being now demonetized, Government must sell gold bars for all purposes absolutely. The one is vitally linked to the other. The Report says its recommendations are interdependent and that point had already been stated by my friend Mr. Ayyangar. I use the same for my purpose also. This means the obligation to sell gold bars for internal as well as external purposes neces-

sarily follows from the elimination of the sovereign. The elimination of the sovereign and the selling of gold bars absolutely even for internal purposes—the two things, I do contend, are linked with one another; and, therefore, if you have to eliminate the sovereign as a legal tender coin, you must make good your word about the giving of gold for internal purposes. In now agreeing to sell gold as well as gold exchange Government would only be correcting the mistake they committed in restricting the scope of the sale of gold in the second Bill. The second Bill is worse than the first Bill, but I contend that the first Bill also was wrong in that it left the option to Government. The option should have been given to the people. In now expressing willingness to sell at least gold at his option the Finance Member is not making a concession to our perversity or obstinacy, but removing an absurdity from his conduct. You cannot stabilize and maintain the rupee at a certain gold value unless, I contend, you are prepared to deal with the rupee and gold both ways, inward and outward. (1-3-1927)

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### The Reserve Bank Bill

#### I

Sir, I rise to support the resolution of my friend Mr. Haji. In doing so I wish first of all to say this. I am quite aware that the attention of Government has been already directed to the importance of this question and the recommendation of the Currency Commission also may be taken to be an indication in the same direction. The Commission said :

“We should welcome any steps which can be taken in the direction of making an extensive and scientific survey

of banking conditions in India. In any scheme of banking reform that may be planned, we trust that due emphasis will be laid on the provision and extension of cheap facilities to the public, including banks and bankers, for internal remittance."

Since this Report steps have been taken to bring a Reserve Bank into being. This is not the place for saying anything about the Reserve Bank. I can say this at any rate that by bringing that bank into being the question of banking facilities for the up-country and the mofussil and the small investor is not going to be tackled. Then again it is said that something is expected in this direction from the Report of the Agricultural Commission. Personally I do not expect that the Agricultural Commission will help us by its recommendation to a large extent in the particular direction to which this Resolution is directed. I am conscious that the Agricultural Commission is bound to make certain recommendations which will go to a certain extent to help the agriculturist. But the agriculturist is not the only person who is covered by the Resolution. There are other people who have to be thought of and the question will not be solved in my opinion by the recommendations of the Agricultural Commission. Then there is the question of facilities to be given to the co-operative banks; because those are also banks to be considered along with other banks. If I may anticipate a certain matter for a limited purpose, I may say this that the majority report on the Reserve Bank Bill does provide for one director to represent provincial co-operative banks. Since then I have seen an amendment put in, which, in my opinion, restricts the scope of that amendment and makes it applicable only to the protection of agricultural interests. But I think urban depositors, urban unions, and urban co-operative societies have also got to be thought of in this connection. In this

Bill again it will be found that the indigenous and joint stock banks go without any representation on the Reserve Bank and, therefore, you cannot say that the Reserve Bank will take adequate care and give adequate protection to the interests of the joint stock banks and indigenous banks. Then it is said that the Imperial Bank has extended its branches on a wide scale. In spite of that, I do not think that it has successfully established a point of contact with the small investors and the small savings man in the mofussil and up-country. If Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas were here he might perhaps have corrected me if I made any misstatement; but judging from my little experience I can say this that the Imperial Bank is not a popular institution up-country and in the mofussil. I am quite aware that the Imperial Bank does minister to the wants of a certain class of people, namely, those people who want loans; and I am conscious again that the Imperial Bank does accommodate these needy people at a rate of interest which is lower than what they may get anywhere else. But there is something also to be said to the contrary. Even taking into account that the Imperial Bank accommodates those who want loans at a smaller rate of interest, my point in this connection is that if you really want to advance banking facilities and banking habits in the up-country you should take care of only those people who want loans—I cannot make a calculation but I may say *off-hand* that perhaps only 5 per cent of those who have got dealings with the Imperial Bank may require loans; and they again will be people who have got securities or gold or such other things and can offer that security and get loans. But what about the 95 per cent, who cannot have adequate banking facilities in the up-country? It is a matter of common knowledge that the Imperial Bank does not maintain a good point of contact with the small depositor in

wisdom and very often exercised in the interest of the London financiers and London money-market in general. It was not only a suspicion but a mere hard fact. As between the State Secretary and the Indian Finance Member, however, there is a definite choice, and I prefer the Indian Finance Member notwithstanding the fact that his training, his connections and his outlook are deeply coloured with a British bias. I prefer the Indian Finance Member to the State Secretary, because the former after all has his actual work and his official responsibilities cut out in direct Indian affairs, and he must be in the nature of things more amenable to Indian public opinion as expressed through the Legislature or outside. Every Finance Member has a certain sense of Indian responsibility, and the past record shows that many a Finance Member has struggled and fought with the State Secretary in the Indian interests, though the domestic quarrels had to be carefully concealed behind the *purdah* of official discipline. I say, therefore, with conviction and deliberate purpose, that the Reserve Bank is in theory at least a measure of financial liberalism to this extent, that much of the real control of finance, currency and credit will be transferred from the State Secretary to the Government of India. This is a part of our large scheme of Indianization in a broad sense, though there may be years before an Indian is actually appointed to the office of the Finance Member. But now the Secretary of State being eliminated from the scheme, the Government of India should be prepared to share that transferred control over the Reserve Bank with us, the Legislature. Then again, the Reserve Bank is certainly a progressive step in the direction of the financial organisation of this country. For, though every Indian problem has a special lining of circumstances to it, India cannot keep itself completely detached from the

Banking and the Law and Custom, regarding Local Bills and Hundies which subjects naturally do not form part of the curriculum of studies for the examinations of the English Institute. An Indian Institute of Bankers will do away with this anomaly. But we shall look forward to the Institute, if established, not only for educational facilities for students, but for a general diffusion of the knowledge of the theory and practice of banking among the people and for measures for the adoption of common banking practice and procedure."

I would advise the Government in this connection to imitate what is being done by the Provincial Governments as a parallel in respect of giving aid on a substantial scale to co-operative institutions whose main function and purpose is not to do any co-operative business as such, but to diffuse a knowledge of the co-operative movement in the country. I call upon the Government of India, therefore, to do something like this, and to come forward with a generous offer of assistance to any central banking institute which is prepared to serve this purpose. Now, I do not wish to say much with regard to the Reserve Bank Bill. It is well known that we are in a state of transition and we also know that the transition stage is a period of crisis for some people. In this respect I may say this, that while we have before us a Reserve Bank at the top, what we find at the bottom is that the private banker is fast losing ground and corporate indigenous banks are not taking his place. I had a specific complaint the other day from a private banker who was doing all his life business as a *hundiwallah*. His complaint was that owing to the facilities given by Government of adjustment and transfers of money on their treasuries the *hundiwallah* is fast losing his business. I should like to state clearly that I do not stand here and I do not plead here the cause of the

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private *hundiwallah*. In course of time he is bound to go and I should like to see him go, because I am anxious that corporate bodies of banking should take the place of private *hundiwallahs* who can charge rates without any limit. But my present point is that the Imperial Bank which gets the benefit of large Government balances at very low rates is actually competing even with the private *hundiwallah*, and of course also with other indigenous banks. I, therefore, bring this point to the notice of the Finance Member and request him to suggest a remedy if he can think of one.

Now the Resolution is important in this respect that India is far more backward than other countries in the matter of banking facilities. Government must of course be aware of this, but I will just give a few figures in this connection. I will quote the case of America because that country has been taken as a model for our Reserve Bank, but on the other hand you will see the great difference in banking facilities which the two countries enjoy. There is one bank in India for about 7,000 villages. There are 670 banking offices in 267 towns out of 23,000 towns. Of these 670 offices 177 are in about 11 towns, 96 are in small towns and the rest are in towns with one office each. On the other hand America has got 35,000 banking offices for a population of 11 crores. Now with regard to England, owing to the recent fashion of amalgamation of small banks, the actual number of banking offices in England has of course decreased, and the figures I am quoting are for 1911 from Sykes on Banking. In that year there were 6,413 banking offices in England, or one to every 5,630 of the population. Just compare that with India where I think there is one banking office for about 5 lakhs of people. That at once gives an idea of the great difference which exists with regard to banking facilities

between America and England and India. And if you take America as a model for India in connection with the Reserve Bank, you ought certainly to do much more in the way of establishing banking facilities in India.

With regard to the Imperial Bank, of course I have already expressed my opinion. In the joint memorandum presented by the Central Bank, the Allahabad Bank, the Bank of India and other banks, the same thing has been clearly pointed out. I know that that is also the opinion of the Chairmen of several indigenous banks, namely, that the Imperial Bank is unnecessarily competing with them. I think even the Exchange Banks also have a grievance in this respect. I have of course stated the Indian view, but if the Finance Member would like to hear the non-Indian view I can refer him to the *Times of India* of a recent date, the 29th September, 1926, in which the editor says this :

" Sir Basil has been a keen advocate of the extension of banking facilities and the banking habit in India. Does he appreciate the point that the present proposals to allow the Imperial Bank to operate as an ordinary commercial bank, absolutely unlettered in all its activities, will tend to stifle further banking development in this country and will force out of existence such local banks as now exist ?"

And with regard to the unfair competition carried on by the Imperial Bank the same writer observes :

" What we have to bear in mind is that this is a country, the bulk of whose population is illiterate. If banking ideas and banking habits are to filter through to this huge population it must be through institutions that are by and of the people. We put it to Sir Basil Blackett that his present proposals to make the Imperial Bank with its huge resources go out as a free lance into the banking field would prevent the growth of small people's banks all over the country, and drive the existing ones sooner or later to

the verge of extinction. Does Sir Basil consider this desirable ? "

## II

Sir, so this is the Reserve Bank after all. It is the *enfant terrible* that made so much noise throughout the Indian world. A child naturally cries immediately it is born. But its cries are drowned in this case by a chorus of congratulations from far and near. Conceived by the Finance Member, it was licked into shape by the Royal Commission on Currency. It has the features of cross-bred parentage. Its lineaments are partly American and partly African. It has Indian blood in its veins. But it shows the sparkle of Indo-British interest in its eyes. It gives evident signs of precociousness. So a playmate and a companion has been provided for it in the Imperial Bank, and among its playthings will be currency, note issue and financial credit. Its swaddling-clothes will be of gold. The indispensable Indian ayah will be provided among its caretakers in the form of some Indian Directors. But while its nominal guardianship will be entrusted to the Governor General-in-Council, its apron-strings will be in the hands of the Indian Finance Member, to be pulled through a complicated mechanism, whose working will be mysteriously concealed. The Indian Legislature is now called upon to witness its baptism, and to give it a charter along with other blessings.

I shall not, however, pursue the simile any further, but come to close quarters with the merits of the Bank. The first claim on its behalf is that it is the measure of liberalism in Indian finance. I must frankly admit that there is some truth in that claim; for the immediate apparent effect of the Reserve Bank will be to liberate India from the tight control of the State Secretary upon Indian finances—a control which that authority never exercised with uniform

wisdom and very often exercised in the interest of the London financiers and London money-market in general. It was not only a suspicion but a mere hard fact. As between the State Secretary and the Indian Finance Member, however, there is a definite choice, and I prefer the Indian Finance Member notwithstanding the fact that his training, his connections and his outlook are deeply coloured with a British bias. I prefer the Indian Finance Member to the State Secretary, because the former after all has his actual work and his official responsibilities cut out in direct Indian affairs, and he must be in the nature of things more amenable to Indian public opinion as expressed through the Legislature or outside. Every Finance Member has a certain sense of Indian responsibility, and the past record shows that many a Finance Member has struggled and fought with the State Secretary in the Indian interests, though the domestic quarrels had to be carefully concealed behind the *purdah* of official discipline. I say, therefore, with conviction and deliberate purpose, that the Reserve Bank is in theory at least a measure of financial liberalism to this extent, that much of the real control of finance, currency and credit will be transferred from the State Secretary to the Government of India. This is a part of our large scheme of Indianization in a broad sense, though there may be years before an Indian is actually appointed to the office of the Finance Member. But now the Secretary of State being eliminated from the scheme, the Government of India should be prepared to share that transferred control over the Reserve Bank with us, the Legislature. Then again, the Reserve Bank is certainly a progressive step in the direction of the financial organisation of this country. For, though every Indian problem has a special lining of circumstances to it, India cannot keep itself completely detached from the

developments of financial theory and practice that is going on in the entire civilized world.

But having said this much for the idea of the Reserve Bank, I must also point out that the Reserve Bank, such as is envisaged in the present Bill, is not going either to give us all the benefits that accrue from such an institution in the advanced countries, or free us entirely from some of the evils which are inherent in the Reserve Bank which will temper, much less eliminate, the defects of the scheme of the Reserve Bank, to bring us in line with the up-to-date theory and practice accepted by these advanced countries. But count is not being taken of the fact that in none of those countries, there is such a system of debased silver currency as has been obtaining in India. And secondly, that the Indian public has not had the benefit of the training, through which those countries passed, in making their way up to an ideal scheme of currency in which metallic currency is eliminated. It is amusing enough to see that whereas in political matters, India is not regarded as fit to touch even the fringe of the system of self-government, owing to her social and educational backwardness, she is regarded in this banking sphere alone to be ready to adopt a financial regimen, whose merits are still contested in the advanced countries. The return to the gold standard in England was itself contested, though I know it has ultimately been adopted. But there is still uncertainty as to whether the countries will or will not return to the system which prevailed before the War, and resort to the use of gold coin and the free convertibility of currency.

As regards the ban put upon the circulation of gold coin by the Parliament Act of 1925, there are people who hold that this bar is not a wise one, and cannot be maintained for ever. On the other hand, Prof. Flux of America thinks that "the time will come soon again when

perfect convertibility will be established and specie payments will again be resumed in some European countries, and that many of the European countries will rather choose, instead of facing a further considerable change in domestic price levels, to re-establish gold convertibility at some new parity. In America, some kind of bank notes even to-day do bear on their face a promise to pay in gold coin, and the promise is also redeemed". My point is that opinion about the present system of gold standard and the elimination of convertibility is not unanimous. But unfortunately, that system is being foisted upon India through the present Act and the Reserve Bank. The root evil of the system of a debased currency in India is eradicated, and we shall be left at the mercy of the financiers who try to maintain prices and credit by endless manipulation. The silver rupee in India is admittedly a note on silver, and it cannot be converted into gold, though its relation to gold is theoretically fixed by statute. But as Mr. Benjamin Anderson of America says:

"Irredeemable paper money is diseased money. It is cured only by gold redemption accompanied by balanced budgets and sound public finance."

He further says :

"You cannot stabilize irredeemable paper money by money market policy. Gold payments alone will stabilize paper money."

The proposed Reserve Bank is intended not to cure the unsound currency system in India, but somehow to bring it in a line, for other purposes, with foreign nations, who propose simply to manipulate the quantity of money and the bank credit by various devices, namely, variations in the discount rates, open market operations on the part of Central Banks and the co-ordinated policy on the part of the public treasury—in borrowing and repaying. Some

simple-minded people seemed to think that in itself the Reserve Bank is an *Avatar* of salvation for India. But they will soon be disillusioned, when the Bank will begin to operate. No doubt, a high authority has said that in a well-governed community, all political power should be wielded by bankers. But this situation will be arrived at only when civilization reaches the apex of its achievement. The banking system of England was for a century an object of legitimate pride for that nation. But it was discovered in the time of war, that the banks succumbed to the wills and the pressure of the British Cabinet. If that can happen to English banks with their tradition of strength and independence, one can easily imagine what can happen to the Reserve Bank, at the hands of the Government, though the Finance Member over and over again assures us that his object in creating a Reserve Bank is to create an institution which will be free from Government control. If the English money market could be made by Government an instrument of war, the Indian money market can conceivably be made by the Government of India an instrument of controlling currency, credit and prices to the disadvantage of the Indian people, and in the interests of foreign nations and foreign money markets. From this point of view, we cannot but closely scrutinize the provisions in this Bill on the subject of the gold reserves of the Bank and its uses. But though, apparently, there is an attempt to free the Reserve Bank from the Government control, it can easily be seen that that control actually comes in a number of ways. The pretence is really funny that while the least touch of the Legislature with the proposed Bank spoils it by political influence and pressure, the Bank is a hybrid both in respect of its constitution and the agency of its control. And I have no hesitation in endorsing the suspicion which some people

have expressed, that the Reserve Bank is a device to transfer the financial power from England to India, simply for the purpose of saving the State Secretary from odium and screening the operation of selfish British interests. Then again, it is not clearly seen why the co-existence of two banks like the Reserve Bank and the Imperial Bank is necessary in India, when the Imperial Bank is not being invested with powers of note-issue, and the Reserve Bank is being allowed to do commercial operations. Even for the purpose of a central financial and banking authority, the two might have been amalgamated into one, and the existing machinery of the Imperial Bank might have been adapted to the needs of the case. There is nothing in the scheme of the Reserve Bank to guarantee the hope that adequate banking facilities will be created in this great country where they do not already exist, or that banking habits will be taught to the people whose financial interests are going to be controlled, in the light of the latest theory and practice of the money market. There is no guarantee that gold would be sedulously conserved in India and not frittered away abroad. There is no guarantee that the gold reserve will be used only in improving the internal material condition of the people of this country. There is no guarantee that the gold standard will be brought home to the people by the introduction of gold coinage and the establishment of convertibility. There is no guarantee that the gold resources of India will not be wasted for the maintenance of exchange ratios in the interests of Government. More convincing proof will, therefore, be required before the Indian people can be persuaded to welcome the Reserve Bank as a saviour, and I for one shall not regard it as a calamity, if it happens for any reason that Government withdraw the Bill or the Bank does not come into existence till the present agreement with the Imperial



Bank terminates, so that we may get more time to consider the position with a larger experience.

I would conclude by just referring to one quotation from an expert, because that will show that these suspicions are not entertained merely by laymen like myself, but they have been held by people who know more of these things. He puts the question and answers thus :

" Why does England want India to establish such a Bank? The answer is :—To get hold of India's Gold Reserves to manipulate them as it thought best. The lay reader will say this is mere prejudice on my part, but fortunately for us Sir Earnest Harvey let the cat out of the bag in Australia. When he failed to get them to agree to the kind of Bank that he wanted, he advised the Private Banks to hand over their Gold to the Commonwealth Bank (to be sent by it to London to be invested) or to themselves to send it to London, and we learn from Sir Hilton Young's paper of 28th May 1927, that the suggestion was not viewed with favour by the Australian Banks. His recommendation to Australia may be summed up—Establish a Central Bank. If you don't like to do so, don't; but give us your Gold in any case."

One is naturally afraid that that may happen in the case of India also.

(11-8-1927)

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### Criminal Law Amendment Bill

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* (Bombay Central Division : Non-Muhammadan Rural) : Sir, I rise to support the motion that the Bill be taken into consideration, but only in the hope that it will be considerably improved before it is passed. I have got to make my position clear as I was a member of the Select Committee and have also written

one or two dissenting minutes, and, therefore, I will state my position before the House clearly, though not perhaps very briefly.

In the first place, I must say this,—that my mind instinctively rebels against the creation of a new offence. But even conceding that some measure of this nature is necessary to put a restraint upon scurrilous writings, we must at the same time see that this new offence, this new penal legislation, is hedged round with necessary and wholesome qualifications. For after all it stands to reason that the remedy in the case of any disease must not be worse than the disease itself. Now with regard to the kind of people with whom we have got to deal in a matter like this, I think we can easily put them under three categories. The first category is of those who are willing to wound but afraid to strike; the second is of those who are willing to wound and also not afraid to strike; and the third is of those who are willing to strike but unwilling to wound. I think that is a comprehensive list of categories and that will help us clearly to see how we should deal with each category in its order.

Now, with regard to the first category, namely, those who are willing to wound but afraid to strike, I think the law may leave them alone; the law cannot touch them; after all they are guilty merely of criminal intentions, and they need not be penalised for that. They are impotent malevolents and they may be left safely to stew in their own juice; and we all know, as Emerson has said, that the best furnace is that which consumes its own smoke. Let this smoking chimney consume its own smoke and not come into the public with it. We will leave the impotent malevolent there.

Then I come to the second category—men who are willing to wound and also not afraid to strike malevolently.

Here is a clear case in which the law must intervene and punish this class of persons. But the real difficulty in a measure like this is about the third category of people, namely, people who are willing to strike, who honestly think they must strike, but yet are unwilling to wound; and in my opinion, what the Select Committee has failed to do is to put sufficient hedging round this new penal legislation, so that adequate protection may be given to this third category of people.

Now, among these three categories of people you will see, Sir, how easily they can all be disposed of. The malicious coward is his own sentinel; he keeps guard on his own mind and does not come out with action; therefore, we need not trouble about him. The malicious man of action is his own accuser and he cannot get any protection. But it is the honest and benevolent but frank critic that requires the greatest protection, and we must see in this House that we give it to him. We are all aware that criticism has played a very great part in reform and progress of civilisation in this world; and even when we sit down to legislate in a panic we must take a very wide view of things and allow this useful agency of criticism to go on doing its work. Law, in comparison with criticism, has a strictly limited purpose. It can and also must tell people in exact and precise terms as to what they may not do. The educative operation of law is after all more negative than positive. The law tells people that certain things may not be done—not that certain things should be or must be done. It leaves man to his own degree of education and refinement and benevolence. I have often fancifully compared in my own mind the law to a toll bar on the road, for it lays down a limit beyond which you shall not go without paying a toll of punishment or penalty. But at the same time, a law, like that toll bar on the road,

never undertakes to see what the speed of your car has been until after you approach or pass the turn-pike or toll bar. There is a limit to action definitely and inexorably fixed, and the law insists that, if you want to transgress or go beyond that line, you must pay the penalty.

Then, Sir, I have absolutely no doubt in my own mind, and I do hope that this House also will have absolutely no doubt in its own mind, as to the class of people who require protection; and, therefore, we must insist that they shall get that protection. I will put before this House the categories I have got in my own mind, and that list of categories is almost in a gradually descending order of merit. First I think the law must give protection to the sly sceptic—the doughty doubter. The service he renders to mankind is that he spreads a very wholesome contagion of doubt and unbelief, and you often feel that by his magic touch the sands of belief and settled opinion slide and shift away from under your feet as when you stand in a swift current of a river.

Then I claim protection, Sir, also for the diligent sociologist. He has obvious zeal for accurately noting down facts which may serve as data for generalization, and in that task he often has got to note down and expose sometimes even vulgar facts, because without the exposure of such vulgar details of religious or public life no useful generalizations can be drawn.

Then, Sir, I claim protection for the cold rationalist before the blast of whose trumpet of reason the walls of dogma and authority fall like the walls of Jericho.

Then again, I claim protection, Sir, for the absent-minded philosopher whose very wide range of generalisation is in itself a guarantee, that he only looks at the wood of society and simply forgets the trees of personalities. For this philosopher I claim protection.

Then I would claim protection even for the mischievous but kindly humourist. We all know that he contributes greatly to the enjoyment of pleasantries in the social world, and yet we know that he sweeps the cobwebs of egotism and superstition from the inner corners of men's minds by the gentle breeze of ridicule.

And lastly, I will go further and claim protection even for the apparently merciless satirist who uses the knife but only in the spirit of a surgeon when performing what may be a necessary operation for the good of society.

For all these classes of people, Sir, I do claim protection from the Law. Sir, it will be remembered that this is not the first time in the history of the world when we are grappling with great controversial issues,—social and religious issues. Every age had its own critics, though of course, they were endowed with a wide variety of temperaments and a varying degree of culture and refinement, but who succeeded by their criticism in the common purpose of reform and regeneration of society. We all know, Sir, that the crude and blunt Luther actually used the hammer and nailed the interrogatories to the door of the established Church. But we also know that there was Erasmus before him, who served the same good purpose by taking his readers on an imaginary tour to Heaven and revealed to them the miserable plight, in which the saints and the so-called religious men were living there. We know Rousseau who was blunt and even vulgar, but there was side by side with him also Voltaire who was sly and mischievous; but both accomplished the same purpose, each in his own way, and that purpose was the bringing of the body politic and society to a higher level.

Now even in our own time, what do we see? We have seen great issues very reasonably discussed from various points of view. And from the religious aspect I may

name issues whose greatness will be appreciated by my simply mentioning them. Now, have not people in our own time dealt with the question of the historicity of Christ? The love-affairs of Lord Krishna have also been made the subject of plentiful speculation and argument. The home-life of Mahomed, as we have all seen, has been a subject of criticism, and the gluttony of Buddha has been criticised, because we know that some people accuse Lord Buddha of dying on account of over-eating of mutton. Now, touching the social aspect of the controversy, I may mention subjects which are quite familiar in our own society and times. For instance, we have in India child-marriage, birth-control, widowhood. Certainly these questions are not very easy of treatment, and yet we see critics who are endowed with a wider vision and who are animated at heart by real benevolence to society. We have seen these great problems discussed and controverted without harming anybody. But all this of course is done in good faith, and the generation of men who do these things is not yet gone and spent.

My real difficulty, therefore, about the Select Committee's Report is that it does not give adequate protection to people in our own generation, who are actuated by benevolence to society and offer criticism instead of facts in pure good faith and honesty of purpose. It is for the purpose of pointing this out prominently to this House that I have stood up, to support the motion that the Bill be taken into consideration, but I do hope also that the Bill will be greatly modified.

(16-9-1927)

## Send-off to Mr. Shastri

The Hon. Mr. Shrinivas Shastri was given a hearty send-off by the citizens of Poona as Agent-General of the Government of India in South Africa.

A public meeting of the citizens of Poona and Cantonment was held at 9-30 a. m. in the Kirloskar theatre, convened by representatives of all parties, classes and creeds in the city. Sir M. B. Chaubal proposed in a humorous speech and Dr. Naidu seconded that Diwan Bahadur K. R. Godbole do take the Chair. The Chairman then called upon Mr. N. C. Kelkar to speak.

"We have assembled here this morning, as the President has said, to welcome the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Shastri. In a way, however, it is more a send-off than a welcome. A real send-off will no doubt be given at Bombay, when he will step into the steamer. But Poona City has its own duty to perform in this respect. Just a few minutes ago, the Poona City Municipality presented him with an address which if paraphrased in other but somewhat familiar terms, means, the City of Poona has given the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Shastri its Freedom. But that was in a sense somewhat superfluous, because Mr. Shastri has for twelve years been the head of an Institution which belongs to Poona and of which Poona is proud. Mr. Shastri's appointment as Agent-General in South Africa has been greeted with a chorus of approval and congratulations. There seems to be a sense of happiness all round, that such a man has been appointed to such a place. The happiness is all right for all others, but I feel doubtful how far Mr. Shastri himself really shares in that sense of happiness.

For he is confronted with a three-fold difficulty in his new task. The first factor of difficulty is the situation itself in South Africa. The old situation might be described

as a counsel of disheartening discord and of deep despair. The situation has no doubt altered, and it is somewhat a better situation. But at the best, it is, think, a puzzle. It is a tangled skein of conflicting interests and sentiments which only a tried and skilful statesman alone can unravel. It is like a weird type-writer in which the keys are unsusceptible to touch, disobedient to order, overlap each other and when touched are likely to fly at a tangent. It is difficult, therefore, to write a finished, clean and sense-making sentence with such a machine. The situation may also be described as a magic harmonium, in which every key answers to a wrong note. In this first factor of the situation, there are again three reasons for this state of things. First there is the South African Nationalist who easily flares up to a point of rebellion, who does not regard England as his mother country, as for instance the Canadian does, and who regards the Union Jack not as a national flag, but as a symbol of submission and slavery. The next is the Imperial authority in South Africa, which is absolutely impudent and like a faded-out picture it makes no impression upon anybody concerned. The Imperial authority in South Africa may just at this moment be compared to a railway passenger travelling with a third class ticket in a first class compartment. Then there is the Indian population in South Africa who bide there on mere sufferance, and are despised like a guest who has overstayed his welcome if he was ever welcome at all.

When even the Imperial authority is not respected in South Africa, you can easily imagine what may be the real situation of India. She is now by the agreement condemned to a system of education and a series of examinations in what are called the Western standards of life, and Mr. Shastri is going there, as it were, to supervise this education as an educational inspector. The second difficulty in Mr.



## The Railway Budget, 1928

Sir, I would like to congratulate sincerely the Railway Member on the Railway Budget statement that he has presented to us. I think it is characterised in the first place by a remarkable lucidity and simplicity, which has made it possible for a layman like myself to understand the statement. Secondly, it is characterised by a sense of justice, in the sense that he has given everyone his due. He has given what was due to his predecessors, to his colleagues, to his collaborators and co-workers, and to the Legislative Assembly also. It is also marked by a graceful sense of modesty, which affords a striking contrast with our past experience. (Loud laughter.) I mean it this way, Sir, that he has tried to discount the good work which he has himself been able to do during the past year, alleging it as his reason that progress had already been made which helped to bring about those good results in administrative matters, and I am reminded of the saying that "*one man sows and another reaps*". As Mr. Cocke has pointed out, his successors will reap the advantages which the present Commerce Member himself will have sown during the next five years. Mr. Cocke has said that those who were witnessing and watching the torpedoing of the Indian Navy yesterday had little time to attend to the railway statement. It follows necessarily that those who were busy in torpedoing the Navy had still less time ; but making such use of our time as we could, we have devoted a little attention to the Railway Budget statement and as an analysis of that I arrive at the following results.

In the first place we must all congratulate ourselves that the gloomy forecast foreshadowed to a certain extent last year has not been realised, notwithstanding the floods and other calamities which overcame the administration.

Shastri's way is the fact that the office of an Agent-General in South Africa is a new one. No doubt Mr. Shastri was a member of the Round Table Conference which met some time ago in South Africa and arrived at this agreement. But it is one thing to sit in a conclave and to share the responsibility of an agreement, and quite another to administer the office of an Agent-General, without having anybody to share the responsibility with him. He will be called to take first decisions and to establish first precedents and conventions, which is a very delicate task, and lastly, the difficulty in Mr. Shastri's way is that the man is new to his office, in fact, new to office at all. I wonder if Mr. Shastri feels like a fourteen years old horse saddled and strapped to run a race. But let us hope he will run it successfully.

His position is no doubt difficult, for he has reconciled himself not only to the difficulties of the situation itself, but to his pledge as a member of the Servants of India Society which is, I think, not to accept a salaried post of Government. But no doubt, he has accepted this office in purely national interests, and what is more, a man like Mahatma Gandhi, leaving aside his Non-co-operation even in its spirit, has not only permitted but insisted upon Mr. Shastri accepting this office for the sake of India and for the sake of South Africa which was once his own. Mr. Shastri possesses the qualities of both the head and the heart, which are required for a successful discharge of his duties. But let us all back them up by our own gushing good will, so that he may feel immensely strengthened."

(12-6-1927)

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## The Railway Budget, 1928

Sir, I would like to congratulate sincerely the Railway Member on the Railway Budget statement that he has presented to us. I think it is characterised in the first place by a remarkable lucidity and simplicity, which has made it possible for a layman like myself to understand the statement. Secondly, it is characterised by a sense of justice, in the sense that he has given everyone his due. He has given what was due to his predecessors, to his colleagues, to his collaborators and co-workers, and to the Legislative Assembly also. It is also marked by a graceful sense of modesty, which affords a striking contrast with our past experience. (Loud laughter.) I mean it this way, Sir, that he has tried to discount the good work which he has himself been able to do during the past year, alleging it as his reason that progress had already been made which helped to bring about those good results in administrative matters, and I am reminded of the saying that "*on man sows and another reaps*". As Mr. Cocke has pointed out, his successors will reap the advantages which the present Commerce Member himself will have sown during the next five years. Mr. Cocke has said that those who were witnessing and watching the torpedoing of the Indian Navy yesterday had little time to attend to the railway statement. It follows necessarily that those who were busy in torpedoing the Navy had still less time ; but making such use of our time as we could, we have devoted a little attention to the Railway Budget statement and as an analysis of that I arrive at the following results.

In the first place we must all congratulate ourselves that the gloomy forecast foreshadowed to a certain extent last year has not been realised, notwithstanding the floods and other calamities which overcame the administration.

But in this hopeful and happy situation there are certain factors which we must separate, one from the other. First of all these are factors which were beyond the control of the Railway Board and under that heading I may mention first the monsoon, which is always a puzzling factor, but which when it is on its good behaviour, is a blessing to all of us, high and low, Government and its subjects as well. Then there is the patronage of the passenger world, which, of course, is not under the control of the Railway Department, but if it is on an increasing scale is a welcome windfall. Then there is the maintenance of the exchange ratio. But this of course has got two sides. One aspect of it is that it necessarily leads to saving on the cost of the imported railway material from England, and we all know that 80 per cent. of the expenditure on railway works comes under the head of materials imported from abroad. So, the new exchange ratio must have necessarily helped the Railway Department a good deal. But I would point out that as against this there is a debit also in that the benefit of the new ratio was secured at the reduction of the inland rupee value of the earnings of the employees of the Railway Department.

Then I turn to the factors which may be said to be under the control of the Railway Department itself. First of all, there is the economy in fuel which has been referred to in the statement. Then there is the larger mobility of rolling stock. Then there is the reduction in the working expenses and better methods of workshop operations. These to my mind stand out as the prominent factors under the control of the Department.

Then there are certain factors which are the result of co-operation; they cannot be said exactly to be under the control either of the Railway Department or outside it,

but for which the credit may be shared by the Railway Department and the Assembly together. First of all, there is the separation of the railway from the general finances in which both of us co-operated, namely, the Assembly on the one side and the Railway Department on the other; and as the Railway Member has been good enough to state, he received co-operation uniformly from the Railway Finance Committee as well as this Assembly, which sanctioned many constructive works that were good for the country. I am glad to observe in this connection that the Railway Member has given full credit to the Members of the Assembly for their co-operation; and in doing so he has admitted that even we laymen on this side of the House can make constructive suggestions which are wise in their own way. This admission of the Railway Member has the result, in my opinion, of *toning down the high talk of experts.*

With regard to the reforms actually achieved, the foremost place of course is given to the reduction of railway rates in favour of third class passengers. Mr. Cocke said that too much attention was given to the reduction of railway fares for third class passengers; but I think the exact contrary is the case. I have taken the figures for 1910 and 1926 and a little calculation shows the following results, so far as I have been able to judge them. In 1910 the number of first class passengers was 7 lakhs; in 1926 it was 10 lakhs—the percentage of increase being 148. The earning per head in 1910 was Rs. 8-9, in 1926 it was Re. 11-10, the ratio of increase being 35. The total earnings from first class passengers in 1910 were Rs. 59 lakhs; in 1926 they were Rs. 118 lakhs or an increase of 200 per cent, as against 148 per cent. A similar calculation for second class passengers shows that the percentage of increase in the number of passengers has been 375 and in

third class passengers who journey long distances—say between Calcutta and Bombay or Bombay and Delhi—occasionally; and of course some benefit will accrue to them in the aggregate no doubt; but I have pointed out the special aspect of the reduction and I do say that the reduction of fares for third class passengers has not received as much attention as it should have done.

Then with regard to the reforms to be achieved, I should have certainly expected from the Honourable Member a sort of programme which he has got in view; and I did expect that notwithstanding the sense of his modesty of which I am aware, and even in spite of the line of poetry with which he ends his statement, I know that a knight ought not to boast when he puts on his armour but when he puts it off; but certainly he could make a programme and a statement of policy; that certainly would not be boasting. I should have expected him to indicate to us the lines on which he proposes to make progress in the administration in the next four years. If I may as a layman be allowed to indicate just a few heads in regard to which we expect reforms at the hands of the Railway Member in the next five years, I shall advert to them as briefly as I can. First of all there is the question of Indianisation. I am aware of what has been said in the statement about Indianisation, but we want Indianisation not only because it is just to Indians that they should occupy the highest places, but it also leads to economy. I want it from a practical point of view. Take the Tata Construction Company. They carry on their work without employing a single European and I do not really see why the Railway Department should not be able to carry out its work without employing Europeans. I notice the reduction that has been effected in the import of temporary engineers from England. But these temporary engineers

will have become permanent I suppose, and they will take a senior rank to Indian engineers. Then again the standard of economy set up has yet to be reached. Then there is a question of greater production of railway material in India about which no reference is contained in the Railway Budget statement. Then there is the reduction in extravagance on the 'lay-out' and remodelling of yards. It strikes a layman like myself that extravagance of expenditure is incurred in the matter of remodelling stations and yards, and specific cases have yet to 'be proved in which direct actual benefits have accrued to the railway finances as a result of the remodelling of yards and stations. Then there is the question of the better treatment of employees. The Railway Member has been good enough to acknowledge the services of the officers but I am sorry he has forgotten the men. I am not unmindful of what he has done in the matter of the Kharagpur strike. I am always ready to acknowledge his noble impulses, but I should certainly have expected from him a good word for the working people when he has referred to the work of their officers. Then, lastly, there is the question of the compensation and amends that are yet to be made to the general revenues from the Railway Department on account of the losses that have already been incurred on strategic and other lines and from the guarantee system. Enormous losses have already been caused to the State and I think we must look to the Railway Department to make good the loss in course of time. There are of course differences of practice prevailing in this respect. Germany I am told derives about 34 millions every year from the railway revenue to the State. On the other hand in Switzerland not a single pie is contributed by the railway revenues to the State. But of course reasons vary. Here we occupy a middle position, and I do make a claim on

behalf of the general revenues that the Railway Department will be able, at the time of the next settlement of our mutual relations, to contribute a greater share to the general revenue.

(22nd Feb. 1923)

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### The Indian Budget, 1928

Sir, we all listened with great interest and satisfaction to the budget speech which the Honourable the Finance Member delivered last week. It is, if I may say so, the swan song of Sir Basil Blackett as the Finance Member of the Government of India. As such it was couched in very subdued tones. It was free from controversial topics and it also contained no boastfulness of achievement. What was perhaps due to him had been said in another House by the Secretary of the Finance Department. In this House the Finance Member contented himself with giving a graceful expression to his own good wishes about the financial welfare of the land of his birth and our birth; and may I reciprocate that sentiment of his by giving expression to my personal hope that on his return to England it may be given to him to enjoy a long further career of distinction in the realms which are his own?

Sir, the Budget presented to us is not in any sense a spectacular budget; but I dare say it is a budget which is really a commendable budget, for it is a normal and balanced budget which we have seen after several years. The Indian tax-payer will share with him a sigh of relief at emerging as it were into the light after travelling through a long tunnel of financial darkness and despair. We are free from the contributory uncertainty of railway finance. Whatever the merits of the exchange ratio established



last year, we can calculate with certainty about the cost of our Home remittances, and the disappearance of the item of exchange under several heads of income and expenditure, so far as it goes, is a thing to be definitely welcomed. The debt position is progressively hopeful. India's credit may certainly be said to be established to a certain extent in the home and foreign markets, and there is everything to be said in favour of the reduction of unproductive debt. The Budget under the revenue heads does not call for much criticism, though it may be said with regret that, notwithstanding the recurrent surpluses of the last five years, there has been no serious attempt at reduction of taxation. But, on the other hand, we must give credit to the Finance Member for relieving the Provincial Governments of their contributions and for abolishing the cotton excise duty. Provincial contributions were a continually running sore, but it will now be healed; and Provincial Governments will once more feel freedom from the shackles imposed upon them by the Meston Settlement.

His last budget is, as it were, the coping stone upon the financial administration of Sir Basil Blackett; and he would allow us, I suppose, as he has done it himself, to view the edifice of that administration as a whole. Many factors have no doubt contributed to the satisfactory position we have arrived at at the end of these five years. First of all, there is the propitiousness of the monsoon which is responsible for the progressively increasing returns of revenue during this period. The Finance Member may claim that he has stabilised prices by stabilising the rupee and fixing the exchange, but he knows as well as we do that the credit for stabilisation of prices is due to the general stabilisation of world conditions in a greater measure than to the stabilisation of the rupee itself.

Then, with regard to the gold standard, which is said to have been established in this country, I must say that so far as I can see there has been no attempt so far to strengthen that position by adding to the gold reserves in this country and that, I think, is certainly a great point of weakness from the point of view of the gold standard ideal.

Then again the Finance Member has used the alternative method of increasing and reducing the currency according to his own ideas without taking into consideration the legitimate demands of the market. By fixing the exchange ratio at 1s. 6d. he will no doubt be saving to Government a few crores in home remittances; but he has done so not without causing a wrongful loss to the Indian producer of an amount which is at least five to six times the amount of the saving to Government; and one feels tempted in sheer desperation to say that it might have been better if he had raised the amount represented by his saving to Government under the head of exchange by imposing taxation which might yield that amount. But it must be said that side by side with the assistance of fortuitous circumstances beyond his control, the Finance Member has also shown a perception of certain correct principles in the general regulation of the finances of the country. Happiness and unhappiness in this world are said to be only relative, and those who are optimistic by temperament and charitable by nature may even derive some consolation from the fact that the Finance Member of India has perhaps done even better than the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Great Britain. For Mr. Phillip Snowden, himself an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, has recently pointed out that Mr. Churchill's financial policy during the last few years has been a failure. According to Mr. Snowden, Mr. Churchill has increased during his term

of office national expenditure by something like 40 millions a year; has imposed additional indirect taxation of about 24 millions; has added to the burden of the local authorities by his various raids upon them; has neutralised the benefit which ought to have come from Sinking Fund payments; has increased the total National Debt; has raised the rate of Government borrowing and has made the conversion of maturing debt a more costly proceeding for the taxpayer. Of course, I cannot vouch for the truth of all these statements; but that is what appears and may be taken as a matter of consolation by way of contrast. Contrasted with this, Sir Basil Blackett's administration seems to have been more successful. For during the last five years, he could show a total surplus of about 15 crores. This cycle of surpluses naturally leads one to think of the financial position of the Government of India during a number of years previous, in which surpluses regularly alternated with deficits. From 1898 to 1913—the years before the War—the total net surpluses amounted to about 54 crores. The era of deficits commenced, which, with only two exceptions, lasted till 1922. In this period of nine years, while the total surpluses amounted to only 23 crores the total deficits amounted to 112 crores—that is to say a balance of 89 crores on the wrong side. The memory of this disastrous policy and its effects takes away most of the consolation, and in fact the whole of the benefit of the financial policy which the present Finance Member has been able to pursue.

Sir, in speaking of any Finance Member of the Government of India, it must be remarked that we intend to speak only impersonally; we must look upon the Finance Member as a continuous entity. The deeds of predecessors and successors are inextricably interwoven. The wise measures of one Finance Member may naturally

shine on the background of the misdeeds of another. Periodical elevations of spirit may compensate for periodical depressions of it. But just as the nation and the government are continuous corporations, so also the Finance Member can be allowed to have only one corporate and continuous soul. Through the opening and closing balances of the Treasury and the schedule of the public debt, the nexus is woven of their indivisible existence. We know Sir Basil Blackett had to perform the Herculean task of cleaning the Augean stables of his predecessor, and we naturally sympathise with him in his labours. But Sir Basil Blackett cannot accuse us of deliberate pessimism if we like to take only a panoramic view of the finances of India from the vantage ground of the normality which we seem to have reached for the moment. From here we not only see but also still feel the effects of the mismanagement of the finances in the years gone by. It is no comfort to us to be told, that we have once more reached the region of balanced budgets, for we cannot forget what we have had to pay for arriving at that region, though with the helping hand of Sir Basil Blackett. We know of those who "husbanded the golden grain," but we cannot forget those who "flung it to the winds like rain." We are, of course, susceptible to the sweet music of the balanced and tuneful budget produced by Sir Basil, but we cannot put out of our mind the manner in which the instrument of that music has been manufactured. For, we are still groaning under extra recurring taxation and the burden of our debt, from which not even Sir Basil Blackett's financial genius has been able to free the Indian nation. And that reminds me of the parable of the great God Pan, poetically narrated by Elizabeth Browning, which has a great moral even for Finance Members and Chancellors of the Exchequer. The great god Pan

made a flute out of a slender reed, but in doing so he spread ruin and broke the golden lilies afloat, while paddling and splashing with the hoofs of a goat. The limpid waters were made turbid. The great god Pan hacked and hewed with his hard bleak steel at the patient reed, till there was not a sign of a green leaf left. He drew the pith out of the reed like the heart of a man and notched the poor thing with holes, and triumphantly said : " This is the way to make a flute out of a reed." But what was the verdict of the poet on that flute and that music ?

" Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,  
To laugh as he sits by the river,  
Making a poet out of a man :  
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—  
For the reed which grows nevermore again  
As a reed with the reed in the river. "

Well, the Budget for the new year is certainly one which, as Sir Basil Blackett says, is a budget which both the Government and the country can view with pleasure. He also prophesies that, if the recent rate of progress is continued our unproductive debt should vanish altogether in about 12 years' time. But we all know that it is a very big "if", and one wonders whether some of the voracious departments will not again open their mouths and raise their heads, if they are not kept under tight control by the new Finance Member, and whether the new Finance Member will advert, as an urgent duty, to the necessity of reducing taxation.

(7-3-1925)

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## The Army Department

Sir, my friend, Mr. Chaman Lal, has given a cut on the Army Department, giving as his reasons, reasons which he says are "obvious. But sometimes we find that the unobvious is also more conclusive, and I am going to say something about that.

In the course of the debate on this subject yesterday I heard a member denouncing the British policy in this matter as Machiavellian. I am here to protest against it, not because it is unfair to the British Government, but because it is more unfair to Machiavelli himself! (Laughter). We all know that Machiavelli is a byword in political history. He stands for cunning statesmanship of the highest order, but what do we find in contemporary history? The characters of one age and generation are easily displaced by those of another age and generation. After the termination of the war I remember to have read a literary critic, who said that, if in this age after the war a great poetic genius came to the front, he could write an epic on the war which would be greater than Milton's "Paradise Lost". "Paradise Lost", of course, contains the tragic grandiloquence about Satan. But the critic said that if an epic poem were to be written now, the poet could well describe the fall of William Kaiser of Germany, which would perhaps be a greater fall than that of Satan himself. Similarly, I would say that if any man with historical and political acumen were to come forward, he could easily write a treatise on statesmanship by which he could prove that Machiavelli was nothing as compared with the British genius in point of cunning statesmanship.

Now, in order to prove this I will just quote Machiavelli himself. (Laughter). In the discussion of this subject we are saying that it is bad policy for the British

that they should disarm the Indian people and should not appoint Indians to the higher ranks of the military service. Now what does Machiavelli say? He was an apostle of autocracy in its highest sense and yet what did he say? I will quote his very words. He says in his book 'The Prince':—

"A wise prince was never known to disarm his subjects; rather finding them unfurnished he puts arms into their hands, for by arming them and inuring them to warlike exercise those arms are surely your own. They who were suspicious to you will become faithful; they who are faithful, are confirmed, and all your subjects become of your party. And because the whole multitude which submits to your government is not capable of being armed, if you be beneficial and obliging to these you do arm, you may make the bolder with the rest, for the difference of your behaviour to the soldier binds him more firmly to your service. But when you disarm, you disgust them and imply a diffidence in them, either for cowardice or treachery, and the one or the other is sufficient to give them an impression of hatred against you."

Now I ask anybody, who is the greater evil genius, the British Government or Machiavelli? Here is Machiavelli actually saying, you should give arms to your people and obtain their confidence. But what is the policy actually followed by the British Government?

Now, may I ask Government whether they can point out any instances in which it could be proved that your Indian officers, military officers, have ever been guilty of cowardice and treachery? I saw the other day a book in the Library which is full of rewards and military prizes given to Indian officers, and the book is full from cover to cover with the mention of the names of these high Indian officers. Now you might perhaps hark back and say, there was the Indian Mutiny, and it was a sepoy mutiny,

and in that mutiny some Indian military officers took part against Government. But that is a thing of the past, and it is high time that all of us forgot the Indian Mutiny. I dare say the last mutiny veteran has by this time died out. It is too late to think of the mutiny now and we must adjust our relations as between the Government and the people of this country.

I would say this that in other times, though there were foreign governments in this country, history shows that those foreign governments put implicit confidence in their Indian military officers. I will give only two striking instances. Who was the commander of that most important arm in the army, namely the artillery, under the Marathas? It was a Muhammadan. Ibrahim Khan Gardi was the commandant of the artillery of the Marathas at Punipat. At Panipat the Marathas may have failed, but Ibrahim Khan gave the best account of himself: he died on the battle-field. He could not be accused of treachery. I will give another instance. Look at Aurangzeb himself. He is said by historians to be the most bigotted Moghul King. Yet he had such confidence in Hindu commandants and captains that when he was in desperation and wanted to catch Shivaji and to defeat him, he could not find a better general, a more trustworthy general than his Rajput commander, namely, Jai Singh, and it was Jai Singh who came to the Deccan and defeated Shivaji and took him as a captive, an honoured captive, to the Court of Aurangzeb. Now what do these contrary instances prove? Here are Marathas putting their absolute trust and confidence in a Muhammadan, keeping him in charge of artillery, and here you have Aurangzeb himself appointing Jai Singh, a Hindu, to go and defeat Shivaji! I do not think history can produce any better illustration of confidence reposed by a government in an alien people even in matters of military command. But it



is not only that we Indians say this. Testimony can be produced from very high English authors themselves on the subject, and I will just quote Sir Henry Harrison, who has pointed out the defect of the military policy of the British Government in this respect. He says :

“ The citizen soldier is after all the backbone of national defence, if not the entire military system; and there is no country in the world except India in which Government not only do not take into account, but also rely upon, the civil population as part of their defensive military organisation. But the British Government have carried the idea of their duty of protecting the people in India to an absurd excess, and they would rather import the available army from England, accept the services of colonial contingents, or perhaps even invite Japan, under the terms of a friendly alliance with her, to spare a portion of her gallant army. But they would on no account trouble the Indian people themselves for defending their own hearths and homes. ”

Well, in the course of this discussion it has been pointed out that the British military officer would not like to serve under an Indian officer. Now may I ask why in this case alone there should be an exception, when we see European officers serving quite willingly under the authority of Indian superiors? Take your District Magistrate. The European District Magistrate certainly does not quit his job because the District and Sessions Judge is an Indian. In the High Court we find that an Indian acts as a Chief Justice sometimes. Do the other English Judges quit their job because they have got an Indian superior at the head? Certainly not. Here again in the Executive Council there are at least three Indian Members. Englishmen serve as Secretaries to them. They do not give up their job because at their head is an Indian.

Why should it be then that in military service alone the English officer should dislike to serve under an Indian head? Now too much is made of the racial prejudice against colour in this matter. It was always pretended that in European wars or in wars in which Europeans were concerned on both sides, Indian troops were not to be utilised, and that the Europeans would prefer to fight out the quarrel themselves. That was the pretence some time ago, but that pretence has happily been knocked on the head in the Great War when it was found that it was the Indian troops who went first of all to the rescue of France and England in Europe, and after that I suppose there would no longer be any talk of coloured troops not being employed in European wars. Then what do we find with regard to other nations? Take Spain for instance, and France itself. France and Spain have actually employed coloured troops in their scheme of defence. Even in Russia non-Christian subjects are admitted to high military service, and I will here just quote one more English authority about whose identity there is no doubt, I mean Sir Henry Cotton :

"The Mogul emperors adopted heartily and completely the policy of trust; Akbar's greatest generals and most devoted adherents were children of the very men his grand-father had conquered.....The British Government, on the contrary, has adopted a policy of suspicion...The Russians can get from the territories they have absorbed in Central Asia an Alikhadoff or a Loris Melikoff. We can only produce men who rise to the rank of Naik, Havaldar or Resaldar."

Now if Shivaji himself were living at this time, I suppose he could not rise above the post of a Risaldar or Havaldar.

*An Honourable Member : Shame, shame !*

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* Take your Indian captain of these days. His chest may be full of ribbons and medals and other marks of military honour, but the latest subaltern with no moustache on his lips would command that old veteran with his white beard. What is all this due to ? Nothing but racial pride; and there I say the sooner Government quit this policy the better. I will hark back again and say that in all this we have an example of cunning statesmanship which out-Machiavellis Machiavelli himself.  
(15-3-1923.)

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### The Public Safety Bill

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :* ( Bombay Central Division : )  
Sir, I am glad that I have been able to take part at least in the final stages of the discussion of this Bill, and I say so because I really think, in all conscience, that it is a bad Bill and I do want to turn it down if I can do so by my vote if not by my argument. At one time I had hoped that the Bill would come back from the Select Committee improved materially. But that hope has been frustrated. I find the Bill comes back absolutely untempered in its absurdity and unshorn of its evil features. I have a double quarrel, one with the Bill itself and the other with the Government who have introduced this Bill. I have a quarrel with the Bill for a number of reasons. In the first place it gives arbitrary powers to Government and in the second place it condemns the accused person unheard. Then the procedure, even as it is amended in the Select Committee, is simply funny because the Governor General comes at the wrong end instead of at the right end. The proceedings should really have commenced

with a notice to the accused person to show cause why he should not be proceeded against under this Bill. But here the Governor General begins the operation by his actually issuing an order, so that all further hope of this prerogative being used in favour of the accused, if necessary, is lost. Then, we see that the materials of the charge are to be kept secret, and absolutely no opportunity is to be given either to the accused or to his pleader to rebut the charges brought against him. The scope of the offence is absolutely vague and uncertain. Lastly I quarrel with the Bill because it penalises even tendencies and doctrines and dogmas instead of actual action. Now on that point, I would just like to draw the attention of the House to a passage in Viscount Morley's book on "Compromise." He says that even for a Member of Parliament who has taken actually the oath of allegiance, it is not illegal or treasonable to actually preach that the Crown should be put into the melting pot. That is allowed because it is only a doctrine; but Government would step in and take action against him only when he begins action, that is, only when he tries to bring his ideas into actual operation, either by taking up arms or fighting against the Crown. I have, therefore, a quarrel with his Bill on all these grounds.

Next, I will place before this House my ground for quarrel with the Government who have introduced this Bill. First of all they have shown in this Bill an absolutely morbid craving for new powers. I compare them in my own mind to the chivalrous knight of the fable of old who, as I have read in the book, wanted to so complete his armour of defence that he ultimately covered his own eyes so that he could not see where he was hitting or against whom he was hitting. Like Don Quixote, the Government are going at all full speed and tilting at a wind-mill, but

just as Don Quixote suffered in that battle, I am absolutely certain that whatever laws may be passed by this Assembly, they will all come to ruin, if the Government do not take Communism seriously and deal with it as it deserves really and not in the present fashion. Then, Sir, I want to make this point that no satisfactory reply has been given to the charge that Government have been unnecessarily taking new powers to themselves when they have ample powers already under the existing law. There is the Penal Code, and apart from punishing the offender in any manner you like, and awarding any term of imprisonment, apart from that—it gives the man into your own power without letting him loose over other parts of the world. Then you have got the Regulations, and under those Regulations you can confine a man for as long a period as you like. And, lastly, I see no reply has been given to the point made by the Honourable the Burma Member. I think he stressed very rightly the fact that the practical purpose of Government in this matter would be satisfied by the Foreigners' Act. I have not seen any reply to that argument that action taken under the Foreigners' Act would absolutely serve the purpose of Government in this respect. It can be said, I think, that a trial under the Penal Code is a better method of dealing with these people. It is more efficacious. But it has been said that our jails are not commodious enough to accommodate these people. But after all how many such people are in question ? At any time only a few persons of this kind can come into India and be in India to be dealt with ; and certainly our jails are spacious enough to accommodate these people. Why, I go further than that and say that our jails are spacious enough to accommodate even certain Members of the Government\* on the Benches opposite, only we have not the right to impeach them for maladministration !

My next point is that the Indian Legislature is being unnecessarily asked to take upon itself a responsibility which is really due to Parliament. Now who is the sort of man who will come under this Bill in India? I take it that he is a propagandist; but nobody will be sent to India for this object unless he is a tried and experienced hand. That assumes that he must have made up his mind, he must have learnt his doctrines and he must have made speeches and learnt to organise in this matter in England itself in the first place or in other countries. It is not as if he becomes a full-blown Communist only after he comes to India. Now let us assume that this propagandist has declared his views when in England. Then the next question is, why should not England herself deal with this man rather than leave him to be dealt with by this Bill here? It was said by a philosopher that the best furnace is that which consumes its own smoke; and if this Communist propaganda is a nuisance like smoke, why should not the furnace of England consume its own smoke rather than pass it on to India to deal with here? Why is the British Parliament asking the Indian Legislature to do this? There is an adage in Marathi, my own language, which says that the wily host often tries to kill the serpent by the hand of his guest. The meaning and the significance of that is obvious. If the serpent is killed by that means, you get rid of the serpent; but if instead of the serpent the guest is killed, an unwelcome guest is by that means also got rid of!

I will now turn to certain special objections which I have got to urge against this Bill. Now this Bill, I suppose, aims at one of three things. First of all, it is aimed against the Soviet. Then it is aimed against the doctrines of Communism, and thirdly, it is aimed against the propagandists of Communism. First let us take the

one time monstrous and very dangerous was ultimately found to be very useful and serviceable to society and is now acclaimed and welcomed by all the world. ....

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : In their own country.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* : Even outside. What is Communism again ? It is only an advanced doctrine, slightly advanced upon Socialism. In the previous stages of the debate Mr. Gavin Jones pointed out that there was a difference between Socialism and Communism and I admit that there is a difference ; but it is very slight. In England, for instance, we see Socialists and Communists falsely mixed up together. (*An Honourable Member* : " No ".) No one knows who is a Socialist and who is a Communist because there is a very thin line of difference between the two.

*An Honourable Member* :—There is world of difference.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar*—Therefore, if Socialism which has been accepted thoroughly by England is not dangerous, I do not see why it should be pretended that Communism which is only the next advanced step should be debarred as dangerous. As Mr. Aney says, it is after all a question of time; and howsoever rudely you may deal with new ideas and doctrines, ultimately they assert themselves and triumph, and I am absolutely certain that this doctrine of Communism also, of course, so far as my wish goes, in its best elements only, will ultimately triumph and prevail in the world .....

*Mr. T. Gavin Jones*—(*United Provinces: European*): Does the Honourable Member support the Third International ?

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar* :—That has nothing to do with this.

I wish to advert to another point. Sir, it has been represented to us in the first speech of the Honourable the Home Member that Communism is something which is

entirely against the Indian religion and Indian culture. Now, let us see how far that is true. He says :

" The other items included in this programme are the overthrow of the feudal relations and the nationalisation of large enterprises, the confiscation from landlords of church and monasterial lands, and nationalisation of all lands."

In the first place, I do not think that the Honourable the Home Member has fairly represented the doctrine of Communism. It does not go as far as that. But taking things bit by bit, let us first come to the feudal relations. Now, Communism, it is said, deals very badly with feudal relations. But what about capitalism itself ? I will just quote to the House a passage to show how Capitalism dealt with feudal relations. I am quoting from "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" by Tawney. This is what he says :

" In a famous passage of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx observes that the *bourgeoisie*, wherever it got the upper hand, put an end to all *feudal*, patriarchal, idyllic relations, pitilessly tore asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors' and left remaining no other bond between man and man than naked self-interest and callous cash payment."

That is the verdict of this author upon Capitalism. Now, what reason is there for the Honourable the Home Member to say that Communism will come into India and deal injuriously with feudal relations ? Capitalism has already done that in other countries, and it has done the same thing in this country also.....

Sir Victor Sasoon :—By what methods ?

An Honourable Member :—By money.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar :—With regard to the other point raised in the Honourable Member's speech, I mean the



nationalisation of large enterprises, I ask in all earnestness, what is wrong about it ? Are we not already talking of nationalisation of large enterprises ? Take the Railways, for instance. Why did you go in for taking the Railways into your own hands and running them as your own industrial enterprise ? Why were you not content to leave the administration to the railway companies ? That is nationalisation of one of the biggest industries in the country, and once you have begun with that, I don't see why you should stop at other things within reasonable limits.

Then with regard to the question of the confiscation of lands from landlords, I do not think that Communism preaches confiscation of lands from landlords .....

*Mr. T. Gavin Jones:*—Of course, it does.

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar :*—It does not. It only provides for common administration for particular pieces of land under a particular system, for tilling by different tenants grouped together. It does nothing beyond that. Then come the church and monasterial lands. Don't we see that already there is a tendency, an accepted tendency, an acknowledged tendency, and an accomplished tendency also, to establish, if I may say so, disestablishment between the Church and the State, a tendency to make the State and politics secular instead of being mixed up with religion ? And if we have to make politics and the State secular instead of mixing them up with religion, we have actually to bring into operation the separation of the churches and monasteries from politics and achieve disestablishment of their property, the church and the monasterial lands.

Then with regard to charity, even in India, which is of course a conservative country so far as public charity is concerned, don't we see that the face of charity is actually

turned by this time, and instead of endowing monasteries and temples, charities have taken a new course, providing for only social service rather than those old methods of practical religion ? Therefore, I say that the points made against Communism by the Honourable Mr. Crerar do not hold any water at all. Government have simply been hypocritical in putting forward those points, and in telling us " Oh, Communism is such a bad thing that we are going to give you protection against yourself so far as Communism is concerned." We have never asked for this protection. Why should protection be thrust upon us ? Sir, Communism, we all know, is not exactly a new theory but it is as old as the hills. It is to be found in a form in Plato's Republic, in Sir Thomas More's Utopia, and later on coming to the Corn Law League days, we find many rhymes about these Communists.

" What is a Communist ? One that hath yearning  
For equal division of unequal earnings.  
Idler or burglar, or both, he is willing  
To fork out his penny and pocket your shilling. "

—The Corn-Law Rhymer's Times.

That was the idea held about a Communist at that time. But in course of time, by the march of time, Communism has triumphed and it has ultimately commended itself to the world at large. Communism is now coming into its own and is an accomplished fact. Now, Communism, we know, the Communists in Russia for instance, show a new feature. They show discipline, they show self-restraint. They show self-denying ordinances. In my mind I can compare them with the Puritans under Cromwell of old, who would impose self-denying ordinances upon his followers. Now, take the case of these Communists. I have read in a book that Lenin, the President of the Russian Soviet, actually lived upon £22 a

month. Now, if that be a fact, does it not prove that these Communist people have got a lining of spiritualism and religiousness in their minds and that they are not as sordid as they are represented to be? (*An Honourable Member* : "Anti all other religions.") Then, again, the Communists are not "irreligious" in their intentions, and in regard to that I will just read out a passage to you from another book :

"Thus, while the Communist party opposes religion and inculcates its own philosophy of Historical Materialism, it preaches the *religion of Social Service*, and lives up to it with a more than religious fervour, and with a discipline which is higher than that imposed by any Church in the world upon its members."

Now if that be a fact, would you call Communism irreligious as it is said to be ? Then with regard to its political tendencies, it is always represented that, like the French Republic of old, the Soviet is going to make war upon the whole world. In that respect, I shall read a passage from a book about Russia :

"All over Russia I found a great apprehension of war, and a passionate wish for peace which the Russians think will be denied them."

You will see from this that it is the other nations that are forcing war upon Russia, not Russia which is forcing war upon other countries, and that the intentions of the Soviet are, therefore, peaceful. After all, what is Communism ? It is only aimed against Capitalism and not against capital. You can easily make the distinction between capital itself and Capitalism. Even in Russia I think Lenin or his companions were not so foolish as to suppose that nations could live without wealth and economic goods or that economic goods and wealth could be produced without capital. Therefore, you cannot suppose that in Russia they

do not want capital: what they do not want is this vicious system of Capitalism. And with regard to the viciousness of Capitalism as a system I will just quote to you a very high authority, than whom there is no greater, Professor Keynes. This is what he says about the Capitalist system:

"Modern capitalism is absolutely irreligious, without internal union, without much public spirit, often, though not always, a mere congeries of possessors and pursuers." Look at that description of Capitalism and let us see why it is wrong to preach against Capitalism, why it is wrong for Communists to preach their doctrines against Capitalism as such and not capital.

Then there is one last point which I wish to make and then I will sit down. That is a special point. That point is that apart from other evils this Bill offends against the Indian sense of hospitality ! I tell you why. I have good reasons for it. What does this Bill want to do ? It wants to penalise at our own hands visitors coming to India and teaching us new ideas. May I ask the House whether India has definitely and finally for ever set its face against the learning of new ideas, and why should we not show hospitality to those people who, with a broader outlook than ourselves, with a broader vision and ampler knowledge than ourselves, come to India and teach new ideas ? This Bill wants to penalise such people at our own hands. Therefore, it offends against our sense of hospitality. But what is the tradition of England itself in this respect ? Go to the history of the 19th century and what do you find there ? England has given not only asylum but a hospitable home to republicans and revolutionaries of the world. (*An Honourable Member* : "To anarchists") Mazzini, Garibaldi, Louis Kossuth, Karl Marx, and Prince Kropotkin. These people were avowed republicans and revolutionaries who had achieved something in their own

countries and then they went to seek protection and asylum in England. England was a monarchical country then and if it did not want to spoil its monarchical ideas it should certainly have closed its doors against those people. But far from doing so, England received those people, welcomed those people, and even lionised those people. And here by this Bill you want to shut our gates against preachers of new ideas and thrust protection upon us when we are not asking it ourselves. Now, take the case of even the present day England. Do not Communists live and flourish there ? Is there any law passed in England even now against Communists as such ? Who is Mr. Saklatvala, who is a Member of Parliament ? I do not know whether he is called a brown, yellow, red or green Communist, but he is a Communist all the same, though he may be called by any of the colours of the rainbow.

Now, we have been told by the Honourable the Home Member that trade unions are trying to purge themselves of Communism. It may be true, but by what method—that is the question. Trade unions are perfectly at liberty to discuss the merits and demerits of Communism and reject Communism if they like, but the method is not by the passing of a Bill like this. Therefore, my objection is, leave us to our own common sense, and if we find anything that is good in Communism we will accept it ; if we find that Communism is objectionable, of course, we will let it down ; we will not accept it. But here you are thrusting protection upon us and that we resent as an insult to the intelligence of the custodians of national common sense and discretion. You must leave that to us. Let the visitors come, let them teach us any doctrines or dogmas that they like. It is for us and not for the Government to sift and see which is to our good and which is not. So long as we are not asking for protec-

tion ourselves, it is an insult to our intelligence that this protection should be thrust upon us, as if we were children who had no discerning intellect to see what was wrong and what was right. But what is really at the bottom of all this is that Communism runs counter to Imperialism. And with regard to Imperialism I will ask the House, are we in favour of Imperialism? (Cries of "No, no" from the Swarajist and Nationalist benches.) We may hold allegiance to the Crown in a way—I say in a way; but are we really "Imperial", and enthusiastic about holding up Imperialism? (Some Honourable Members: "No, no.") We are for breaking up that sort of Empire because the latest word in world politics to-day is, "Commonwealth." Let it be established in this country, let us be friends, England and the Colonies.

Any scheme of Communism is regarded as devilish and Satanic, but here is what this author says:

"The Prince of Darkness has a right to a courteous hearing and a fair trial."

I say:

"and those who will not give him his due are wont to find that, in the long run, he turns the tables by taking his due and something over. Common sense and a respect for realities are not less graces of the spirit than moral zeal. The paroxysms of virtuous fury, with which the children of light denounced each new victory of economic enterprise as yet another stratagem of Mammon, disabled them for the staff-work of their company, which needs a cool head as well as a stout heart. Their obstinate refusal to revise old formulæ in the light of new facts exposed them helpless to a counter-attack, in which the whole fabric of their philosophy, truth and fantasy alike, was overwhelmed together. They despised knowledge, and knowledge destroyed them."

closer to any other Indian than any European adventurer, though he may pretend ever so much to be soaked in benevolence to the Indian people. Let us tell him that the cause of the peasant is one and indivisible throughout the Bombay Presidency, and even the country for the matter of that. I think on the whole that the Ahmedabad people have a better title to discuss the grievances of the Bardoli peasant under the Chairmanship of a Poona friend, than Great Britain had to disposing of the fate of the natives of mandatory territories in Africa in a conference held in Switzerland, under the Chairmanship of some Danish or Norwegian jurist.

*State—the Supreme Land-Lord*

So far as the Bombay Presidency is concerned, there is practically one uniform kind of land-tenure in operation. The State claims to be the supreme land-lord. The Rayat is brought into direct contact with him. And in the so-called peasant revolts, which occasionally occur, we see nothing but a manifestation of the desperation, to which the rayat is driven in his dealings with the official land-lord. This revolt is, in spirit, neither better nor worse than the revolt which any desperate debtor sometimes makes against his creditor. The peasant riots in Maharashtra of 50 years ago, which led to the Deccan Agriculturist Relief Act, are a case in point. They cut the noses and the ears of the creditors, burned their valuable records and committed many other similar acts of violence. The Government then stepped in as a benevolent friend of the rayat, and for his protection passed a piece of legislation, which is now declared by common consent to be useless for its purpose. In other parts of the country we find Government intervening with their Tenancy laws which afford equitable intercession between oppressing land-lord and the oppressed tenant. But who

war etc., they naturally get even a kind of sympathy from people who are habitually in favour of constitutionalism. But when the harassed peasant simply refuses to pay the assessment, and drives the Government to coercive process, he can easily turn the tables and put the Government in the wrong. The presumption naturally arises that the peasant would not be recklessly ready to risk the forfeiture of his land which is his only cherished possession in the world, and a corresponding presumption that the assessment contested must be really onerous or inequitable.

*The Times Correspondent*

The State stands in the position of an individual creditor of evil repute, and the grossness of its cupidity is revealed in all its nakedness. People then realise the sheer helplessness of the peasant debtor and the iniquity of the State proceeding to make its exactions with all the physical force of the police and even the military at its command. That is why the most skilful attempts of exponents of the official doctrine fail to mislead the public. That is why the fire-eating exploits of the special correspondent of the *Times of India* have failed to turn one hair on the body of those who read in that paper dreadful or disgusting descriptions of the state of things in Bardoli. This correspondent has passed into service all the jingo jargon, which he learned in the great War, in describing the Bardoli movement. And so we read that Mahatma Gandhi is the Chief of the General Staff, Vallabhbhai Patel is the Commander-in-Chief, secret preparations were made in Bardoli, even women like men have taken up arms, and have come out like amazons to do military duties with warlike songs on their lips.

These, we are told, are likely to come into conflict with the armed military troops of the Government, when the time comes for reaping the crops on the forfeited



its up-to-date elaborations, the peasantry throughout the Presidency feels that it is all in the same boat. The issue raised in Bardoli is a typical issue. It is what can be called a test case, and those who are engaged in the Bardoli struggle have, therefore, a representative character which must be supported and backed up with all the force and the resources at their command by the peasantry in other talukas and districts as well. One only regrets that Government in the Revenue Department did not realise all this, and put the one needed stitch in time, which would have saved the proverbial nine as a consequence.

The crux of the Bardoli dispute is the demand for inquiry made on behalf of the Bardoli peasantry into the revised assessment and its denial by Government. And I will deal with this one issue, giving the complete go-bye to the numerous side-issues which incidentally arise out of this. In fact I may straightway tell you what aspects of the controversy I am not going to deal with in my short speech. I am not going to deal with the question of the ownership of the land; I am not going to discuss whether land assessment is a rent or tax; I am not going to discuss the difference between the Mirasi tenure and Survey tenure; I am not going to dwell upon the benefits and propound the claims of a permanent settlement. I am prepared for the moment to take, if I cannot also accept, the legal position of the agriculturist *vis-a-vis* the Government just as it is under the Land Revenue Code. But I will deal with the only question whether the inquiry demanded should have been granted or not. Even in this matter of the demand for inquiry, the issue has been made wonderfully clear by the position taken up by the Bardoli-leaders, that any inquiry would satisfy them provided it is in the nature of a real inquiry, and made by one

who can be supposed to be able to bring an independent mind to bear upon the issue. Personally, I cannot imagine how any official can dare to upset the conclusions arrived at in this matter by so many high officials in the Revenue Department and ultimately by the Government itself. An official with the requisite degree of courage and discipline to do so would be a perfect miracle. But I point this my difference of view with the Bardoli leaders in this matter, not to provoke them to upset any compromise which they may think it wise to make on the basis of an independent official inquiry, but only to point out that their original demand has been wonderfully moderate. And I honestly think that far from Government suffering in their prestige by granting this demand, they would have only earned credit for graciousness which is always so becoming to Majesty.

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*The Real Need for Inquiry* -

Well, I need not, I think, here go into the procedure prescribed under the rule of the Land Revenue Code for making a revisional Settlement. You are probably aware of that. I refer to the rules here because they are the only restraint upon the Government and the only guidance to the settlement officer, in determining assessments in settlements. As the late Mr. Romesh Chandra Datta has pointed out, however, "The weak point in the Bombay Revenue system is the same as in the Madras system. The conditions of enhancement at each recurring settlement have not been defined. The cultivator does not know on what grounds the State will claim an increase at the next settlement. The security which is given to the cultivator of Bengal and Northern India is denied to the cultivator of Madras and Bombay. The former knows and can reckon beforehand on what grounds his landlord can claim an increase of rent, the latter does

The element of uncertainty in the process and method of revisional settlement has been amply manifested in the present case of Bardoli. All the officers concerned in this, from bottom to top, were agreed that the assessment must be enhanced. But curiously enough they all differed from one another, as to the grounds on which enhancement should be based. The Settlement Commissioner tears to tatter the original report of the Settlement Officer Mr. Jayakar. The Revenue Commissioner does not exactly agree with the Survey Commissioner. And Government in the plenitude of their wisdom simply hold silence and do not at all discuss the grounds of their final decision. Apparently, Government thought that their one act of reduction in the proposed enhancement would be considered to possess grace enough to cover any multitude of sins of omission on their part. But the unsophisticated may ask the question whether, even for reducing the enhancement from 33 to 20 or from 25 to 20, some logical grounds have necessarily to be adduced, as for enhancing it above the original assessment even by one per cent. And if there is to be no logical reason for fixing a revenue demand in a revisional settlement, where is the fun, may I not ask, in maintaining this prolonged and costly process of making settlements and writing reports about them? If Government are not to be responsible to argue anything with the cultivator, why should Government not apply the simple rule of the thumb and fix its own demand, as the inspiration of self-interest may dictate for the moment? Within the maximum limits prescribed, any scale of assessment would be as justifiable as any other. The measure of harshness or generosity may be safely left to vary with the foot of each Settlement Commissioner, and the peasant will know that, in the matter of settlements, he has only got one more deity to

propitiate along with so many others in the pantheon that he worships, the benevolent or wicked according to their nature. He will be content to accept the figure of assessment applied to his own case, with that same spirit of sportful enterprise with which he would read the result of the lottery for which he might have bought a ticket. My point is that, as it is at present, the operation of the so-called scientific revisional settlement is a farce and its result a most puzzling uncertainty. Perhaps the Government expected that the Bardoli peasant would be satisfied and pleased if they told him, that in their hands, he has been dealt with very lightly, as he has been let off with a 20 per cent. enhancement, whereas in the hands of the terrible Survey Commissioner, they would have had to submit to an increase of 33 per cent. But this jugglery of comparative statistics cannot deceive the peasant when he thinks even the 20 per cent. is excessive, and he is determined to know the reason for fixing up the figure of enhancement even at that. On our side, we have a proverbial illustration of the money-lender, who, in making his calculation of interest, says to the debtor, "Here is three into four equal to thirteen and with plus three, it should make eighteen. But I am inclined to be lenient to you, and I make a voluntary deduction of two. That makes 16 and then with the gusto of flashing generosity, he says "Pay up 16, and let us be done with it." Whereas pure arithmetic would make it only 15 instead of 16. All this becomes pertinent, when the point of a demand for inquiry is taken into consideration and properly stressed, as I wish to stress it here.

### *The Farce of a Settlement*

We are all aware of the grounds which are ordinarily supposed to be logical grounds for enhancing the assess-

ment. As for example, (1) the state of communications, (2) proximity of markets, (3) the trend of prices, (4) general economic conditions and history of the tract, (5) result of crop experiments, (6) land prices and (7) rental values etc. But it is not enough that these grounds should be so adverted to by the Settlement Officer, that he should have said something under each head but whatever *he* likes. The point is that on most of these grounds, there will always be something to be said also on the side of the people, as the Settlement Officer will say on the side of Government. And that raises a definite issue in each case, which should be tried not perhaps exactly as in a judicial court, but at least in an earnest conversation of discussion or argument between the Settlement officer or Government on one side and the friends or advocates of those who have to submit to the revisional settlement on the other. It is for this reason that the primary Settlement officer has, even according to the official method, personally to visit a certain number of the villages to be settled by him. This I suppose is also the reason why the settlement rules make it necessary for the Government to issue regular notices of the introduction of the revised scale which Government ultimately approves of. Now in this case of Bardoli the Primary Settlement officer, it is definitely alleged, did not do his duty of personal inquiry in the villages. And as for the notices issued after the issue of the G. R. on the Bardoli settlements, no regular hearing was given to the applicant who had sent in their written protests. Is it unreasonable to expect that, when men like Rao Bahadur Bhimbhai Naik lodge definite well-reasoned and statistical protests based on personal inquiries, Government should have had the courtesy to direct the Revenue Member or some other responsible official to give R. B. Naik an adequate personal hearing?

*An Appeal to Our Own*

I would like to put it to Government also in another way. They expect the subjects to respect official righteous indignation; and their administration, we know, is always a long record of outburst of such indignation. They have so many corns to their feet that hardly a moment passes when somebody does not tread on them. But may they not condescend to respect one solitary outburst of righteous indignation which has come upon the Bardoli peasantry, in the honest belief that they have been over-assessed in the revisional settlement? We are all aware that, apart from the petition lodged by R. B. Bhimbhai Naik and apart from the continuous agitation in the press since the Bardoli Settlement G. R. was published, Vallabhbhai Patel had written a personal letter to His Excellency the Governor, requesting him to take up the matter in his own hand. My point is that Government cannot pretend or complain that the Bardoli agitation came upon them as a surprise and overwhelmed them before they had time to put matters right. But apparently, they treated it not as a matter of notice or caution but as one of *zid* or prestige. Here I would like also to remark that people have felt a great disappointment and mortification over the fact that the presence of five eminent Indians in the Governor's Cabinet could not prove an efficient guarantee against what has so regrettably happened. I can understand the value of official discipline, and I do not wonder that His Excellency the Governor took the fullest advantage of the situation by declaring from the house-tops that his Cabinet of Executive Councillors and Ministers were unanimous in supporting the official action taken in Bardoli. But I also know the value of public opinion, and, therefore, I wonder that public opinion should have been so weak in this country, that five such



eminent Indians should have the courage to flout that opinion in such a manner, and to be participants, willing or unwilling, in measures of repression which cannot reflect any credit upon their intelligence, much less upon their patriotism. Their conduct on the present occasion only emphasises and strengthens the indiscriminate doctrine of the thorough-going Non-co-operator and the whole-hogger that there could be no co-operation with the Government in any shape or form, for the public only stands to reap the losses and not the gains of association of Indians with Europeans in matters of responsible administration. It would be regarded as a culpable weakness on their part, if they could not influence the Government enough to accede to the reasonable demand for an inquiry in the Bardoli settlement. On the other hand, if they even at this late hour find out an honourable solution for the Bardoli problem, they would be only vindicating the principles, in pursuance of which and not as a matter of personal profit or ambition, they have accepted these offices under Government.

#### *A word to Government*

To the Government also I would say one last word, and that is this : Let them not make a fetish of prestige. This is not the first time that they have been called upon to show that they can be generous as they are strong; and in a few cases, they too have disclosed their susceptibility to counsels of wisdom. Their land-revenue would not be in peril, even if they grant the inquiry. On the other hand have they profited by the struggle so far ? If half at least of what the *Times*' correspondent has written about the stalemate being reached in Bardoli and the whole Taluka being in the grip of Vallabhbhai Patel be true, it would of course be a matter for self-satisfaction

in all this trouble to the public; while on the other hand, it certainly does not prove the gratification of prestige of the Government so far. It is profitless to forecast what Government can do in future with their Police and Military. We can all assure the Government that this is not meant to be a political struggle. It is simply a protest, though of course a very earnest and sincere protest, against certain methods of Government about making settlements. Let them, therefore, take this rare manifestation of the peasant's mind with all the sportsmanship and the grace they can command.

I would remind the Government of the Kaira case of 1917-18. A perusal by you of the dissenting minute of Sir Shankaran Nair to the Government of India's despatch of 5th March 1919 would prove most interesting reading. In that minute Sir Shankaran has depicted the failure of constitutional agitation even in revenue matters with such vividness that the Bardoli affair before our eyes seems an exact repetition of the non-payment of assessment movement in Kaira 11 years ago. Sir Shankaran concludes his note with the observation, "If this was the case under Lord Willingdon, we can imagine what might be the situation under less sympathetic rulers." Now comparisons are odious and yet in the opinion of some people Sir Leslie Wilson is even a more popular Governor than Lord Willingdon. But under him are happening, before our eyes, things which Sir Shankaran asks us to imagine might happen under a Governor less liberal than Lord Willingdon. But we know the reason why. Even the Governor is a puppet in the hands of the civilians where official prestige is concerned. The Bardoli peasant may be said, therefore, to be doing a good turn to the present and future Governors by undertaking a struggle which may result in their emancipation from the thralldom of prestige.

Well, if neither the counsels of wisdom nor of patriotism are to prevail, if the rigidity and pressure of the civilian steel frame must triumph over all the eminent Indians in the Governor's Cabinet, and the generous instincts of even His Excellency the Governor, there is nothing else left for the public, than to ask the Bardoli peasant to go ahead, and to gird up their own loins to give him all the assistance at their command in this righteous struggle. And the public can do so, in my opinion, with an absolutely clean conscience. As I have said before, the Bardoli dispute has the representative character of a test case. What has happened in Bardoli, I mean refusal by Government to make proper inquiries in enhanced assessment, has already happened in so many other cases. There is the agitation going on in the Colaba District for the last two years. There is the case of the Devgad Taluka which is now coming to the front, and there may be others also in course of time. And if the Bardoli peasant fails in his struggle, it would be humiliation not for him alone, but for the whole peasant class, and also the leaders of public opinion, throughout the province. I need not bear any formal testimony to the great stake the Bardoli peasant has put forward in the struggle, and the enormous sacrifice, for which he shows himself prepared. And I would conclude with only expressing my hope and offering my prayer, that courage will be vouchsafed to him from above, to see it through.

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## Public Safety Bill

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar's Speech in Assembly*

Sir, I rise to oppose the original motion and in doing so I am not going to repeat any of the arguments which I laid before this House in Simla but will try to cover new ground, if possible.

Sir, the point I would like to make is that the objective of the Bill is, in all conscience, a very small one. If, as I allege, the objective is a small one, the Bill is unnecessary. But if the objective or target of the Bill is intended to be a large one, then I say that the Bill is inadequate and insufficient. Therefore, Sir, whether it is unnecessary or insufficient it is useless. Now, Sir, to whom does the Bill really apply? Let us find that out. It does not, in the first place, apply to an Indian British subject ordinarily resident in India; and it does not also apply to the subject of a State in India. With regard to aliens it has already been pointed out, and I accept the correction from the Home Member that the *Foreigners Act* applies to these people and not to the persons contemplated in this Bill, that foreigners and aliens can be dealt with under the *Foreigners Act*. Therefore, it comes to this: that the Bill does not apply to Indian subjects, it does not apply to State subjects, it does not apply to aliens and furthermore it does not apply to people who have regularly resided or maintained a residence in India or have carried on any trade, business or profession or held any office or employment in India and for the purposes have resided in India at regular intervals during that period. After thus enumerating all these categories of people to whom this Bill does not apply, what is the real residue? Only a handful of people can be really affected and must be in contempla-

tion under this Bill. When I say 'handful' I should say that the fingers of your hand will perhaps be too many to mention these people who are in the contemplation of the present Bill.

Throughout these days we have been hearing only of two names, Spratt and Bradley, Bradley and Spratt. Nothing more. I might make a rhyme about it and say :

Bradley and Spratt and Spratt and Bradley,

They have together made a very fearful medley.

You cannot ask us to pass such a difficult and objectionable measure as this Bill with such a small objective. It is very like, I may say, using a Nasmyth hammer to kill a fly; or if I may offer you another metaphor of my own creation, it is like using a tractor harrow to comb out a few fleas from the head of a gypsy woman. (Laughter.) The question, therefore, is : why not try other remedies than coming to this Assembly with this Bill ? I think I mentioned it at Simla as one of the remedies, namely, the manipulation of the passport regulations at Simla. I still stick to that argument and contend that much can be got out of the use of that remedy. Why should not His Excellency the Governor-General himself take upon him the responsibility of issuing an ordinance ? It will remain in force for six months without the Assembly having got anything to do with it. During these six months you can comb out all these undesirable Britishers and deport them and immediately on that as a supplementary measure you can put your passport regulations all right and begin the manipulation at the other end. Why do it at this end ? So, what with the ordinance to be issued by the Governor-General and the proper and effective manipulation of the passport rules at the other end, I suppose the Government of India can get really what they want. I may at once say, Sir, that I am not one of

those who have got any sympathy or much sympathy with this mere mischief-mongering Britisher who comes into India with his propaganda. I would also say that here are a number of capitalists in this country who are going to object to this Bill; but you cannot certainly allege that these capitalists are in league or unison with Communism. Therefore, Sir, you must really appreciate our objection to the Bill and the objection which the Indian capitalists themselves raise. I just read in the papers that the Bombay Merchants' Chamber and Bureau, itself a capitalist body, has actually passed a resolution saying that while it will co-operate with Government in any other reasonable measures that may be proposed in this respect, it is positively against this particular piece of legislation. Therefore I say that the objective is a small one.

By this Bill Government are going to institute in this country a kind of Star Chamber and asking the Assembly to co-operate with them in instituting that objectionable institution. There is one point of difference between the last Bill and the present Bill. It is this: whereas in the last Bill the High Court Judges were to form a Bench, in this particular Bill Sessions Judges have been mentioned to form a Bench, and not High Court Judges, and I think that is a very important point of difference to be noted.

Now, the question is whether the High Court have expressed their opinion on this measure. It is really significant that the High Courts have refused to co-operate with Government in regard to this Bill. It is very likely that the High Courts with a big judicial sense must have refused to look at this measure; they must have refused point-blank to do this dirty job for the Government:

Then there is the question of forfeiture of money and property. If there is one argument for which one might support the amendment of my Honourable friend here, it

is this: the innovation about the forfeiture of money in the hands of banking establishments, and I would really like this Bill to go out for this reason, if not other reasons, for eliciting public opinion, because I am quite sure that the banking establishments even in this country have got such a tradition and a sense of privilege of their own that they would rightly object, in my opinion, to the new disabilities that are being put upon them and the interference that is threatened in their work.

Now, I shall briefly deal with one or two larger aspects of the Bill. I have already said that we in India do not like Communism in its extreme form, and if I may give one reference to the public opinion prevailing in India about Communism in respect at least of one doctrine of it, namely, maintenance of private property, I may at once refer to the Nehru Report in this connection and point out that the Nehru Report does give a guarantee to maintain the institution of private property, and if we may suppose that the Nehru Report concentrates the enlightened public opinion of India, then you have in it a very good check upon the maintenance of private property. That guarantee is in conflict with the dogmas of the Soviet. That should prove to the House that India is not going to tolerate all this nonsense about the abolition of private property.

After all, Sir, the question of abolition of private property is a question of opinion. It is after all a theory and even taking the Soviet dogma at its best or at its worst, it comes to this, that Government seeks to tilt at a mere doctrine, a socio-economic or politico-economic theory,—nothing better or nothing worse than that; but the real point about that theory is that it does not harm anybody. It is the possible harm resulting from this Bill that is objectionable. Of course, violence in any form or shape

or at the hands of anybody we at least in India would stoutly oppose. Soviet literature or Bolshevik literature is actually being allowed to be brought into Britain and is being tolerated to be read by the British public with impunity. After all, the literature about the Soviet and Bolshevism that we get in India is an infinitesimal fraction of the whole literature that is dumped into England and which is being read, devoured and digested by the British public. So far as I can see there is no prohibition against the dissemination of such literature in England. I may be wrong again in this matter and I would really feel obliged if the Honourable the Home Member would put before the House the provisions that are used in England itself about putting a stop to the Russian or Bolshevik propaganda being carried on in England. What are the real facts? What is the present Act and what are the prohibitions issued against literature and propaganda of this kind in England itself?

Then again there is an independent testimony to the toleration which is accorded to the Soviet propaganda in England itself. For after all the Labour Party has got such a thing as the extreme social democratic party or even a Communist party in it, and I want to be told, if it is a fact, that the Labour Party as a whole has cut off this gangrenous limb from it. So far as my information goes; this extreme wing which is fraternising with Bolshevik propaganda is still an organic part of the Labour Party in England. If that is so, then it follows that it is not a thing which ought to be dealt with by legislation.

The real thing is this, that in England they are more tolerant than the British Government in this country. They have been for generations past giving quite equal treatment to opposite kinds of doctrines in this matter. They allow full privilege to Capitalism to speak out its



mind and make its own propaganda. They allow Communism and extreme forms of social democratic principles also to make their own propaganda in England. And that is the real attitude for any Government to take, namely, allow equal opportunity and equal freedom of opinion to opposite doctrines of any type. For the last fifty years, England has seen Socialism advance step by step and stage by stage and England has not yet put its foot down against the growth of Socialism and its going up to the point of Communism. And if we may care to characterise what is really actually happening in India at the present moment, I will only say that they are the mere beginnings of the growth of the Indian Social Democratic Party in England to which nobody can take exception. Capitalism is thriving in India, and why should not the other theory also go on here so that the people may be able to judge for themselves which of the two is better and more useful for the country ? Then, there is one more thing and it is this. England has tolerated this propaganda about social democratic principles for the reason that no material violence results from these activities. That is the experience in England, and that I assure this House will ultimately be the effect in India also. Propaganda will certainly go on, preaching there will be, dogmas and theories will flourish and will have a full life even in this country, but I may assure the House that after all there will not be much violence directly resulting from these theories.

For otherwise have we not got enough of crime in this country ? The Honourable the Home Member was reading a sort of diary as to what happened in Bombay during the last two months. If you read the Bombay newspapers at random you will find therein murders and other acts of violence going on from day to day and how are

you going to account for all that ? Are they in any way due to this Bolshevik propaganda ? Certainly not. There are other elements, evil elements in human nature which find their manifestation in every city. Therefore, it is not right to confuse matters and mix up the results of the ordinary human mind with the results of the preaching of a particular theory even in the Bombay City. In England, as I said, the Social Democratic Party and the Labour Party have been working for the last fifty years, and with what result ? There has not been any violence. There has not been any revolution. I myself have seen the strike of the Triple Alliance in England in 1919. I saw with my own eyes how that strike failed. Then, again, take the General Strike which was perhaps a more formidable strike, and which happened in England in 1926. It had almost led to a civil war; such at least were the fears of those who contemplated the results of a successful General Strike of that character. And yet what was the result ? The rationally-minded Labour leaders never participated in or encouraged that general strike. It was only the extreme wing and a very small fraction of the Labour Party at that. Such extreme wings there will always be in any country, but they will always be outnumbered by the more rationally-minded men in the country. One particular fact about this General Strike of 1926 I may mention, and it is remarkable for this reason. Sir John Simon led a campaign against this General Strike in England in 1926, and how did he achieve the result of defeating the Strike ? By the manipulation, if I may say so, of the little finger of that subtle lawyer, by a little manoeuvre of going to a law Court he got the whole General Strike of 1926 abolished and finished.

If really there were elements of violence behind that General Strike, that strike would not have ended as it did

then. Therefore, my point is that though there are these dogmatic preachings and furious preachings sometimes about Bolshevik propaganda, there are not real or substantial elements of violence behind that propaganda. And in this connection, I would just quote Mr. Hubert Bland who gives expression to the resulting and prevailing opinion about the possibility of social revolution actually taking place in England. He says :

"The physical force man, like the privileged Tory, has failed to take note of the flux of things, and to recognise the change brought about by the ballot. Under a lodger franchise, the barricade is the last resort of a small and desperate minority, a frank confession of despair, a reduction to absurdity of the whole Socialist case. Revolutionary heroics, natural and unblamable enough in exuberant puerility, are imbecile babblement in muscular adolescence, and in manhood would be criminal folly."

Here is a prominent Labour Party man expressing this view. He continues—

"The treat of shocking clamour of bloodshed is bound to create in any society, a revolution among the human section of the middle classes and also the working classes. The section which is blinded by class prejudice to all sense of social responsibility is the only class which treats personal violence from the working class with a superstitious terror that defies enlightenment or control. Some one has said that during the agitation made by the unemployed in England in 1887, the Chief Commissioner of Police in England started at his own shadow and mistook Mr. John Burns for the French Revolution."

Here in this case, I may add however, that the cap fitted on both heads, the heads of the people on either

side, for we have known that people like Lord Bramwell, blue-blooded aristocrats, openly said as Presidents of the respectable Societies from their high place that they would come out into the streets and oppose physical force if there was a question of the abolition of landed classes. Here, therefore, you have got people on both sides, here is Lord Bramwell giving a threat of revolution and physical violence, and why should it not be tolerated and taken at its proper value when coming from a working class man ?

There is only one other argument which I will touch and it is about the Youth movement. I am not going to say anything about the Youth movement, for we all know how both to cherish it and treat it at its proper value. The Youth in India will be for ever what it has always been not only in India, but everywhere else in the world.

People in England had to pass through this phase themselves. Take the whitebearded Bernard Shaw of the present day. He was at one time a youth himself. He himself has passed through a phase of thought and activity which might have been called revolutionary in his time and I would not like to point to this fact of his once having passed through that phase but with a view to the ultimate results which he points out and in this connection I will just read an extract from one of his Fabian Essays and you will like to hear it. He says :

"Number of young men, pupils of Mill, Spencer, Comte and Darwin, roused by Mr. Henry George's *"Progress and Poverty"* left aside evolution and free thought, took to insurrectionary economics; studied Karl Marx; and were so convinced that Socialism had only to be put clearly before the working classes to concentrate the power of their immense numbers in the irresistible organisation, that the Revolution was fixed

for 1889—the anniversary of the French Revolution—at latest, I remember being asked satirically and publicly at that time, how long I thought it would take to get Socialism into working order if I had my way. I replied, with a spirited modesty that a fortnight would be ample for the purpose. When I add that I was frequently complimented on being one of the more reasonable Socialists you will be able to appreciate the fervour of our conviction and the extravagant levity of our practical ideas. The opposition we got was uninstructional; it was mainly sounded on the assumption that our projects were theoretically unsound but immediately possible, whereas our weak point lay in the case being exactly the reverse. However, the ensuing years sifted and sobered us. "The Socialists", as they were called, have fallen into line as a Social Democratic party, no more insurrectionary in its policy than any other party."

*Happy result*

I have quoted this passage to show you that you need not have any fears about undesirable things coming from this Youth movement. It is a legitimate movement. It was bound to come. It has come. It will go on. It has got a foothold in the country. One youthful generation always succeeds another youthful generation. There is never a stop put to the succession of youthful generations. The whole country is advancing. Free thinking is advancing—free thinking not only in politics and economics but in the social and religious departments also. Therefore, all things are moving to very happy result and the Youth movement is one of the signs. I, therefore, say that neither the Youth movement in this country nor the growth of Social democratic party principles in this country are such that Government should come forward to this Assembly with this drastic and repressive measure of legislation.

tent myself with rather a general discussion of the budget on this occasion. The Honourable the Finance Member, in my opinion, need not have made any apology for not being able to put before this house, a spectacular or melodramatic budget. The reason why he could not do so was obvious. Every one knows, every sensible man knows, that fireworks are not made of mud or dust, and that the present times of the country are not appropriate for a spectacular budget; nor I suppose is the temperament of the Honourable the Finance Member suitable for such a purpose. We require other times and other people to present spectacular budgets before the House. We have had experiences of all these. First of all, it requires a reckless civilian, who is promoted to be a stopgap and an imitation Finance Member of this Assembly, to put forward a spectacular budget. Then we must have something of the warmth of a world war as a setting for a budget of that kind. Then there must be huge deficits, approximating to a material fraction of the whole revenue and expenditure. The ratio of exchange should have risen upto 2s. 11d. or something like that, and there must be a necessary or voluntarily-created obligation of liquidating our gold reserves in England and letting out, as it were, a stream of melted gold for the benefit of other people. Then there must be crushing taxation. Such are some of the conditions under which a spectacular budget is made. And unfortunately, for the present Finance Member, none of these conditions are obtaining in the country at present. All the skill that he can display in this House is the skill of a rope-dancer. It is quite enough for him if he can balance the revenue and the expenditure in the budget before this house. If, without impertinence, I may say one word about the character of the budget, I may say that the Finance Member has shown clarity of vision

and the budget on the whole makes a better appeal to the understanding of the Members on this side of the House than some of its predecessors. But I think there is scope for improvement in making the budget still fuller and clearer. I may refer to the remark made by my Honourable friend Mr. Birla last year that the complication of the budget papers are such that a member of the Assembly would generally take about six months to understand the budget in all its implications. Of course, the observation need not be taken literally. But when a man of Mr. Birla's business training and instincts says that, I think the difficulties of an ordinary layman can easily be perceived.

Sir, we on this side of the House are not so much interested in the explanations generally given and which take up much space of the budget, the explanations about the small differences here and there on either side between estimates and realisations. Sir Malcolm Hailey in 1921 boasted in these words :

" I have in my department men who, if I would allow them to do so, would be capable of putting up a budget which would easily defeat the scrutiny and defy the criticisms of the House. They would conceal, among the innumerable items which go to make up a budget, a liberal provision of reserves that the House would never detect, which would relieve him of the embarrassing necessity of having subsequently to produce demands for supplementary grants. "

What he meant was that the Assembly owed it to the mercifulness of the Finance Member that there was any occasion for the House to be called upon to sanction or refuse excess expenditure and supplementary grants. The observation was characteristic of the bureaucratic spirit and the official pride of the Civil Service, from

which the business of the Finance Member at any rate should be free. But I shall willingly concede the more modest and reasonable claim made by Mr. Shankarrao, the budget officer of the Finance Department, who said a year ago that, if the official estimates of revenue and expenditure varied or deflected on either side by about 1½ percent, it was a natural deflection, and that even private people and businessmen could not make a higher claim to accuracy in that respect. But what the House is really interested in is not the criticisms of slight or moderate decreases in the realisations of financial estimates: I may go further and say that the House will be content to receive the figures of actuals for the last complete year, and the revised estimates for the current year, as simply a statistical appendix to the financial statement and not as an integral part of it. What the House, however, is generally interested in, is the imposition of new taxes or the remission of old ones and the changes, if any, in the existing taxation schedule. The House also feels interested in getting an insight into the financial plans which Government must have in their view for the next year. It also feels interested in understanding the merits or demerits of the capital programmes to be undertaken by Government, the provision and the justification for any loans that may be intended to be raised, and the arrangements for the repayment or liquidation of the existing funded or unfunded and floating liabilities. I do not mean to say that those topics are excluded from any Finance Member's statement, but the question is one of taking the House into greater confidence than at present as regards the mystery of these matters. The Finance Member should be ready to tell this House, not only what it does not know, but also inform it of what is wrong or what is going wrong. In this matter, I can of course realise the



difficulties of the Finance Member, who is himself a Member of the Executive Council which is collectively responsible for the administration of the spending departments, and, therefore, cannot come out and criticise the other departments. He has not got the almost autocratic powers that the foreign Ministers of Finance have got in Europe, not even the qualified independence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in England. The Chancellor does, to a large extent, control the expenditure of his colleagues, but here in India, he can do very little in that direction. As Sir David Barbour, himself an ex-Finance Member, said before the Welby Commission

“Theoretically the powers of the Finance Member resemble those of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but practically and at times he may be much more in the position of registering expenditure which other authorities wish to incur than that of actually controlling it.”

The position of course has improved, since the minority of the Welby Commission said :

“For the Indian Executive, the budget is not a binding document. It is a voluntary expression of anticipated expenditure.”

But left to itself even now, the Assembly that votes the budget, could not do much, if the Finance Member will not consider himself, more than he does at present, as the watch-dog of the tax-payer, rather than the defender, if not the advocate, of the Executive Council. Sir Basil Blackett expressed the view in 1923 that the present system of having an official Chairman for the Finance Committee should not continue, and that he should be in a better position, as bound in duty, to criticise on occasion the expenditure of Government of which he is a Member in this respect. One can imagine that a conscientious Finance Member may be asserting himself to a certain

extent, at the meetings of the Executive Council; but he owes it to himself, that is to say, his present constitutional position, that the Assembly views him as a conspirator with the heads of spending departments, rather than the tax-payer's watch-dog. At present he no doubt combines the industry of the accounts clerks and the shrewdness of the businessman. But he has, if I may say so in fairness to himself, no scope for showing the talents of the statesman. There are, of course, limits within which he can control, but these are very narrow limits. For example, the Commander-in-Chief must be generally unanswerable, when he puts his foot down and says : " I must have so much allotment, for otherwise I cannot maintain the army in its required efficiency. " The efficiency of the army against visible or invisible enemies can easily prove a bludgeon before which the statesman and the economist may quail. But the capacity of a country for bearing taxation is a consideration that ought to outweigh the consideration of the fastidious military expert, who, it is possible, may entertain ideas of perfection of military preparation which can never be realised. After all, the military expert is and must remain the servant of the people on whom the ultimate responsibility even for their own defence and protection rests. Consequently, we see in other countries Ministries have sometimes to resign on the issue of the conflict between economy and military perfection. In India, however, it must be long before we can see ministries formed or making their exit on the ground of national economy. At present, in this Assembly, we may discuss and criticise the military expenditure as a matter of courtesy and friendliness at the hands of the Governor-General, but our voting powers in this respect are enormously limited. Mr. Hilton Young himself has said:

“Men contending for economy in general are always at a disadvantage when pitted against men contending for expenditure in particular.”

And even there the powers of the Governor General to restore cuts are unlimited. Surely, such a constitutional position is not likely to put heart into the Assembly in discussing the Military Budget or help the Finance Member to realise his wish of keeping down expenditure. Looking at it from another point of view the want of sufficient time for discussion on Demands for Grants is again an additional difficulty in the way of the Assembly. At present, the days allotted for this are only five. And out of this, a material portion is taken up by the discussion of certain representative cuts. These representative cuts leave practically very little time for the consideration of other items of revenue and expenditure, and matters of administration upon which the searchlight of criticism could usefully be directed. I have never, during the last five years, seen any of these heads reached on account of the remorseless guillotine that follows on them at the end of five days. So far as I know, they have never been discussed in this House, and many a culprit among them, like the “New Capital at Delhi” escapes scot-free, simply because of the fall of the guillotine. The guillotine is practically upon the discussion and not upon the Demands for Grants. This leads me to the question of an extension of the time allotted for the discussion of the Demands for Grants. The present number of days is out of all proportion to the large number of items to be discussed. This is probably due to the necessity imposed by Government upon themselves and the Assembly of finishing the whole thing from the presentation of the budget to the guillotine on the discussion, within only two weeks. And that again leads me to the

question as to whether the date of the presentation of the budget cannot be changed. The point was first started by Sir B. N. Mitra before the Chamberlain Commission. He said: "The Government of India followed the present practice in England, and having done so, they never gave serious thought to altering it". The Commission itself suggested either the 1st of January or the 1st of November, instead of the 28th of February and they recommended the change in the interest of accurate accounting and sound budgeting, in view of the fact that the Monsoon practically ends at the end of October. I am aware that Government in 1923 issued a resolution, in which they referred in this matter to the opinion received from Provincial Governments and commercial bodies in India and ultimately dropped the question for a change. But if we take the conclusion of Government as settled facts on every matter, the Assembly might as well shut up its shop. The question also arises in this connection, whether the Legislature should not sit for a longer period than it does at present. And for that purpose it would be better, if the Assembly begins to sit from the first week of November and finishes its business in March or perhaps earlier. As an alternative, I may suggest that the Railway Budget, now that it is separated from the General Budget should be presented at the Simla Session, as was the idea at one time, and the General Budget being presented in January, the discussion on the Demands may be given full two weeks in February. In England, I think the budget estimates are presented in February and the discussion takes place in August.

The Finance Member has tried to simplify matters by explaining the position clearly about the liabilities arising out of the Postal Cash Certificates. Last year, Mr. Moore referred to the possibility of the Finance Mem-

ber being convicted and sentenced to one day's simple imprisonment for the concealment of these liabilities! The present Finance Member, I suppose, has taken the warning and done the needful in this matter. He has also cleared up the position, with regard to the interest-bearing obligations of Government in a detailed statement appended to the financial statement. In fact, throughout the financial statement, he has aimed at elucidation rather than at mystification. But there still remains the question, whether he would not go further in this direction, by eliminating the figures of railway expenditure from the budget and concentrating only upon the figures of general finance. The problems of railway finance enormously complicate the matter. The Railway Department practically give Government no breathing time. Their projects in hand and their commitments leave Government and general finance at the mercy of the Railway Department. Fanciful suggestions lead to surveys. Surveys lead to the construction of earthworks. The earthworks, when complete, demand laying of rails. Rails are useless without rolling stock. And once a line is opened, it creates an eternal demand for working expenses, repairs and reconstruction. As the Finance Member has himself observed, "one commitment leads to another." But may not one legitimately ask, whether we may not hope for a time when there will be no commitment, when a clear gap of no-commitment will be left, and when the whole question of the further extension of railways may be considered? For, the necessity of finding money for the construction of railways practically shuts out the consideration of other useful schemes of public utility, such as irrigation works. The Finance Member has mentioned, with apparent unconcern, railways and irrigation in the same breath. But will he say what is the expenditure on irrigation as com-

no confidence in this foreign Government. As one writer on this subject has put it:

"If the importance of public investments were brought home to them, if they could be made to understand that these loans were to be spent economically (which was unfortunately not always a fact) for the good of *their country*, the people of India would not be slow to put their savings or hoardings at the disposal of the Government. Unfortunately, it is not true to say that want of confidence in the Government and their general financial policy, and from 1893 in their currency policy, are not among the chief causes which encourage the people in hoarding."

People in India know that sterling loans are disadvantageous, because they mortgage Indian undertakings to lenders in England. But in the first place they never asked for loans being raised in England, and as for the use of their own money in India, Government are responsible for making over the entire disposal of their funds to the Imperial Bank, and not taking steps to afford banking facilities to the people. Everyone knows that the Imperial Bank is a tyrant and a partisan. Its Directorate is under the thumb of the Manager, and its Governors cannot govern. The methods of the Imperial Bank, so far as indigenous industry is concerned, are simply condemnable, and it is great wrong to the Indian people, that Government have not so far irrigated the country up to its innermost parts, through proper financial channels, so as to teach the people banking habits by affording them proper facilities for getting interest on their small deposits, and for receiving loans for the development of indigenous industrial concerns. The words "the proper development of the country" as used by the Finance Member in paragraph 76 of the financial statement are almost synony-

With regard to this offer and demand for co-operation, I may tell the Honourable Member that the age of willing co-operation with Government has gone for ever; and the race of co-operators is extinct, being killed by the Government themselves; and my reply to his demand for co-operation will be given in the poet's reply to the music-hall jilt or courtesan in these words:

"When you had lovers by the score,

You never knew your part,

Now that lovers are no more,

You have learnt it by heart,

When you by legion were beloved,

The way you sang was simply hissable,

Now that your singing has improved,

We know you are no longer kissable."

(24-5-1926)

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### India's Salt Supply

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar's Speech in the Assembly*

Sir, I move that the Demand under the head Salt be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this with a view to raise the question of making India self-supporting in respect of salt-supply. Sir, this is a subject which is likely to make a large demand on anyone who wishes to deal with it in an adequate manner. But I will try to be brief and also observe the limitations which I have in this respect imposed upon myself by the wording of the motion of which I have given notice, namely to consider only the question of the possibility of making India self-supporting in point of salt-supply. At the same time, I must observe that it is not absolutely irrelevant that the question of salt duty should be treated along with this, for the question which

I am raising, namely, the self-sufficiency of salt, presupposes that there will be greater and larger production of salt as well as greater consumption of salt, and in that case it will lead necessarily to an increase in the collection of salt duty. Then again, in order that India should be self-sufficient in respect of salt, perhaps an import duty of a protective character may have to be imposed, as we say it should be, and in that case also there is likely to be an increase in the salt revenue. From these two points of view, I feel, therefore, that the consideration of the question of the salt duty also becomes relevant.

Now, there are two views on this subject. I will summarily dismiss this sub-topic or side topic. There are, as the House knows, two views about the salt duty. One view is that the salt duty should be totally abolished. The second view is sometimes expressed in the action of Government who do not hesitate to keep the duty, even at Rs. 2-8-0. I occupy, I should say frankly, a somewhat middle position. I would certainly be opposed to the keeping up of the duty at Rs. 2-8-0 in any case and under any circumstances. At the same time I would not oppose a small salt duty, because it would be a revenue duty and in my opinion, even the poorest of the poor under the constitution and under this Government, if they should be self-respectful, should be expected to contribute say about 8 annas for a maund of salt. Therefore, I occupy in this respect, as I said, a somewhat middle position. In this respect, I make my own the arguments which have been very succinctly stated by the Taxation Inquiry Committee with reference to salt. They say :

"The objections to this tax are all well-known. It falls on a necessary of life, and to the extent that salt is essential for physical existence it is in the nature of a poll-tax. The bulk of it is paid by those who are least able to



contribute anything towards the State expenditure. Salt is also required for various industrial and agricultural operations, and for cattle. Unless it is issued duty-free for these purposes, some burden is thrown upon the industries in which it is used."

That is the view on one side. On the other side there is the view put forward by Sir Josiah Stamp. He says :

"I should work out the salt burden on a low income (viz. salt) and ask, if abolished or altered, in what probable respects well-being would be improved by the ordinary exercise of the improved purchasing power. If inconsiderable, I should continue the burden."

That is very nearly my position. There should be a duty on salt, but it should be very clearly very inconsiderable, so that it may not fall heavily on the poor people and further, if such a tax is levied and collected, I would maintain that the proceeds, if not absolutely earmarked, should be understood to be spent for the poor people from whom the duty is collected.

#### *India's Salt-Supply*

Having said so much to prove the relevancy of the question that it is possible to make India self-supporting in respect of salt-supply, I now turn to the main thesis, and that thesis easily lends itself to asking a number of questions, and, therefore, by asking those questions I am going to indicate the heads under which I am going to discuss that matter here. The first question will be, does India get sufficient salt for all and various purposes at present ? The second question will be, even if she does so, why should even a part of that salt come from abroad ? My third question will be, will it be impossible or unjust to take steps to prevent imported salt coming into India ? My fourth question will be,

what will be the proper method to stop this import? Then, if we stop the imported salt, can we make up the deficiency in India itself? If so, by what methods? And the last question will be, what have Government done so far in the right direction? I suppose these various headings will generally give this House, in anticipation, an idea of what I am going to say about the subject. Taking up the first question, as to whether India at present gets the needed quantity of salt for all and various purposes, I should begin with this basic remark that, even for purposes of jail dietary, Government recognise that about 14 to 15 lbs. should be the average per head per year for each prisoner. Of course, there are various figures for various provinces, and the average goes up to 17'61 lbs. per head in Bengal, Madras, Bihar and Orissa. These are practically rice-eating provinces. Then it is 14 lbs. in Assam, which is also mostly a rice-eating province, and 11 lbs. in the rest of the provinces of India which are partly *bajri* and *jowari*-eating and not wholly rice-eating. But if we take all those figures together, one may fairly say that the jail dietary includes about 15 lbs. of salt per head per year. But that is the minimum. Your ordinary home dietary or household dietary certainly cannot be satisfied with that small measure of salt. Therefore, I should like to add something to that. Then, again we have got to take into consideration the demands made by the agricultural operations and the industrial operations of the country and also the demands made for medicinal purposes.

If we put all these three things together in addition to the household dietary, I think, I may fairly presume that the average amount of salt per head required in India would be 16 lbs. per annum. Taking the Indian population at 30 crores and making up a calculation on that basis,

for 30 crores of people at the rate of 16 lbs. I think the total amount would come to about 6 crores of maunds or roughly 21 lakhs of tons of salt. As against this, what is the quantity of salt now available in India? That quantity comes to about, in my opinion, 5·28 crores of maunds. Therefore, obviously there is a deficit of at least 72 lakhs of maunds in this respect. Then, harking back to the main theme, namely, that India should be self-supporting and assuming that imports have got to be excluded, deducting from this the quantity of imported salt which is 165 lakhs of maunds,—if India should be self-supporting we shall have to produce, in my opinion, 237 lakhs of maunds in India.

*Average Salt-Consumption*

Now, I have taken 16 lbs. as the average measure of salt-consumption in India, but if you look at the figures of other countries you will find that I have not made an overestimate in this respect. For, look at the figures of salt consumption in other countries :

|                   |     |     |     |               |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|---------------|
| England           | ... | ... | ... | 40 lbs.       |
| Portugal          | ... | ... | ... | 35 lbs.       |
| Italy             | ... | ... | ... | 20 lbs.       |
| France            | ... | ... | ... | 18 lbs.       |
| Russia            | ... | ... | ... | 18 lbs.       |
| Belgium           | ... | ... | ... | 16½ lbs.      |
| Australia         | ... | ... | ... | 16 lbs.       |
| Spain             | ... | ... | ... | 12 lbs.       |
| Prussia           | ... | ... | ... | 14 lbs.       |
| British India     | ... | ... | ... | 10 to 12 lbs. |
| Holland           | ... | ... | ... | 11½ lbs.      |
| Sweden and Norway | ... | ... | ... | 9½ lbs.       |
| Switzerland       | ... | ... | ... | 8½ lbs.       |

If you look at these figures of consumption in other countries even admitting that some of these countries are

highly and intensely organised for industrial purposes, and require a much larger measure of salt than India would require under present conditions, even then, I think, it will be admitted that the measure of 16 lbs. is not a very ambitious one. India is said to be an agricultural country and agricultural cattle have necessarily to be considered along with agricultural population, but, for the present, I think no one takes any account of the measure of salt that would be required for keeping these poor dumb agricultural cattle in health. If a man does not get to eat, how can he get poor cattle salt to it ? But everyone knows that, even these cattle have got a very good relish for salt, and I have seen large blocks, where they were available, put before cattle and licked out of shape in course of time by these cattle. That proves that even cattle like salt, but unfortunately they cannot get it. That is the difficulty. For industrial purposes the salt required would not be very large, but for medicinal purposes it is required. As I said, for agricultural purposes especially it is a good fertiliser, from the medical point of view it is a germicide, from the ordinary man's point of view it is an appetiser and it produces good taste and relish. For all these reasons, I think 16 lbs. per head per year would not be considered a large demand, and as I have already shown, taking the imports and home production together, there is still a large leeway to be made in this respect.

Then, the question is, why should even a part of this supply come from abroad ? I think, it is a very legitimate and natural question to ask how salt is produced. What is the raw material or stuff out of which salt can be manufactured ? Have we not got that sufficiently in India ? The considerations in favour of India being self-supporting in this respect are these. First of all, we have

got a very long seaboard. Then we have got sunshine and prolonged summer weather in India. There is cheap labour, and there is the hereditary knowledge of the manufacturing processes, for you must remember that we were not born only after the British came to India. We lived in this land long before. We did eat salt, and in order that we should eat salt, it must have been produced and there must have been skilled artisans to produce it. Could we not, therefore, claim a rich heritage of skilled knowledge of the art of producing salt in this country ? Certainly, Therefore, I say, we have a large sea-board, sunshine, prolonged summer weather, cheap labour, hereditary knowledge of manufacturing processes and the possibility of improved methods by a little research and guidance and we are all learning new methods. Even supposing our methods were old fashioned and antiquated, still we are being educated now and we are coming in touch with new methods, and India's mind even among the ranks of the people who produce salt, I do not think, is non-receptive to the extent. You entertain the hope and ambition of teaching the agriculturist to improve methods. Cannot you entertain a similar ambition to be able to teach improved methods for salt manufacture, if you mean but to do it ? Then, there is a sufficiency of capital required for this purpose in India. It is not a business which requires a very large amount of capital and we can certainly lay claim to this, that for this business in particular India can produce its own capital. So much from the point of view of quantity and quality. That being the case, why do we import a large amount of salt from abroad ?

*Increase the Quantity*

As to the possibility of increasing the quantity of salt in this country, I suppose that does not need any elaborate argument. Still what do we find ? We find that

both Burma and Bengal import and practically use only imported salt. In that particular respect, they differ entirely from the other provinces in India. With regard to the improved quality of salt it has been admitted by the Government themselves that salt of an improved character can be produced in this country. There was a debate in this House in 1925 and I would just like to read out to the House what Mr. Lloyd, on behalf of the Government, then said :

" The view of the Central Boards of Revenue is that, in all probability, it is possible to produce salt in Madras on a very large scale which will be good enough for Bengal. We also claim that some of the salt which we are producing in our own monopoly sources in Northern India is equally good. "

The difficulty, however, arises from distance, freight and so on. I am not merely concerned with that. I want to place before the House the fact that the particular quality of salt required for Bengal can be produced in Madras and certain other parts of the country if Government mean to do it.

At present we find from figures that the imported salt mostly goes to Bengal. Bengal consumes 5 lakhs of tons valued at Rs. 174 lakhs. Burma takes one lakh of tons valued at Rs. 26 lakhs. The imports from the British Empire are 2'61 lakhs of tons, valued at Rs. 80'15 lakhs, and the imports from foreign countries are 3'34 lakhs of tons, valued at 94'16 lakhs. These two items together would show the large amount of money which could easily be kept in this country and which is now unnecessarily being driven out of it, simply because India is not, at the present moment, in a position to produce the particular kind of salt which, it is alleged, is required for a particular province or two.

Then with regard to the improvement of the quality of salt. I should like incidentally to mention my experience here. Some years ago, I visited at Belapur a friend of mine who was himself a manufacturer of salt. I visited the place and was looking at the operations. The first crests of salt were very fine and white, and then, as I was standing there I saw that the man who was appointed to gather the crests, dipped down the shovel a little deeper and brought along with the upper-surface salt a little mud, and made the whole thing unclean, or rather not so white. I was struck with it. I asked the man why that was so, and he said "People sometimes are fools. They go by mere labels and they acquire habits. In that respect, if we bring out the uppermost salt, it is regarded as less salty than if it is of a darker character." That salt of the darker character is salty and is manufactured in certain parts of the Bombay Presidency. My point is not what the Bombay people should or should not eat, but that it is perfectly possible to manufacture quite good kinds of salt even in pans near about Bombay. That is my point.

*Foreign Salt Imposed*

Now, the question arises, why should there be so much of imports of a particular kind of salt from foreign countries in to Bengal and Burma. The one explanation that we have been able to gather from Government in all their statements and replies is that, Bengal people and Burma people like a particular quality of salt and that we cannot help it. But the question is, whether this was a natural taste on their part, or that this taste was forced upon them by Government by any artificial methods, by which they benefitted the foreign and British manufacturer of salt. In this connection, I need not remind the House of the history of the salt trade and salt manufacture in the times of the East India Company. This business has passed through a

number of vicissitudes. It was at one time an absolute Government monopoly. Then, it was not a Government monopoly. It was an excise business at one time. It was a mixed excise and monopoly at another time. There were very high import duties put upon this. That means that the rulers of that time did exactly what they liked. But taking all that together, the net result is that this foreign imported salt, said to be of a fine quality, has been persistently imposed upon the Bengali and Burmese people in the interests of the British manufacturers. For that reason, I say a double wrong is being done to the people of Bengal and Burma. You first impose a salt on them for a space of 50 years, make them acquire an artificial taste for that kind of salt, and then turn round and say: "Here are these people wanting this particular kind of salt. How can you prevent them from eating that kind of salt?" But in all this Government escapes its own obligations. We on the contrary do insist that, though Bengal may like a particular kind of salt, the first duty of Government is to prevent foreign salt coming in, even at some sacrifice of the taste of the Bengali people, and secondly, along with it, to teach the people to improve their own methods in India and to produce the kind and quality of salt that may be required by Bengal and Burma. But that is a subject which I would not like to tackle myself, but will leave it to my friend Mr. Neogy and to my friend from Burma sitting up there. They will take care of that allegation against the people of their provinces. If the representatives from those two provinces say that they want a particular kind of imported salt, irrespective of the cost and the consequences to India, I have nothing to say. But if they will stand up in their places and say, "No. This taste has been created by the British Government and imposed upon us in



the interests of the British manufacturers, we are prepared to give up this taste if an honest effort is going to be made to produce a better kind of salt in this country," it is a different matter altogether. Therefore, I leave that question entirely to my friends from Bengal and Burma.

Then the next question is, what steps should be taken to prevent the import of foreign salt. The first and obvious thing is to put a heavy protective import duty on it. If you say that the Bengalis have acquired a taste for a luxurious kind of salt, let them pay through the nose for it. Why not? Impose a heavy duty in the general interest of India with a deliberate purpose, in order to make India self-contained in a number of years. Then the Bengali people will have to give up this acquired habit or submit to the costly foreign salt for the time.

*Worst Era for India*

Then as for the import duty, the British Government have got a precedent in what the East India Company did, and certainly the present British Government cannot say that the predecessors of the present Government were wrong. What did the East India Company do? Bombay was paying a duty of 12 annas per maund on the indigenous salt. The duty on imported salt was between Rs. 5 and Rs. 6. It was as high as that, but all this disappeared in the era of free trade which came trumpeting its benefit into this country, and while trumpeting its own glory, deliberately killed the indigenous industries of this country. We painfully remember that the era of the propagandists of free trade was the worst era so far as India was concerned. So a wave of principles of free trade came upon India, and then at home there was insistence from the Parliamentary Government that import duties and excise duties in India should be equalised. As if equality is the only criterion of equity!

But how did this free trade help the foreign importer of salt ? He was already ahead of all other countries, and especially India, in point of facilities for shipping. British merchants had their own shipping as much as they required to enable them to bring out salt at a very low figure. There was no competition for the British shipper. He could afford to bring salt at very cheap rates and flood the country with it, so as to bring Indian salt under a discount. In this particular manner was the opinion deliberately created, under very artificial conditions, in the mind of certain people in certain provinces, that imported salt was better than Indian salt, and now Government come forward and fling that argument in our faces, and whenever we say that India should be self-supporting, they say that Bengal and Burma want this particular kind of salt and how are we to make it costly to import ? But I do maintain that it would be quite far to make imported salt costly for Bengal and Burma.

Now the East India Company did it for one purpose, and I would say that the British Government should do it for another purpose. Why did the East India Company do it, that is, maintain this distinction between 12 annas and five or six rupees a maund ? They did it in the interests of their own producers of salts. Only change the purpose and motive, and do the same thing. Place a very high duty on foreign salt with the intention of discouraging importation and its improving the indigenous product.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Why don't you boycott the imported salt then ?

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: The time has come to boycott you !

Mr. K. Ahmed: That is very unfair; you cannot change our taste for Liverpool salt.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: Then the second method by which this can be done is that the salt operations should be centralised and organised under one authority. It has been done to a certain extent, but even now there is an echo of the remnant of things by which the organisation of salt control was distributed over different provinces, and there was provincial rivalry among provinces in this respect. Salt is an Imperial cess or tax. It goes into the treasury of the Government of India. The administration partly takes place in the provinces no doubt, but it is supervised in the name of the Imperial officials so that, although the operation takes place in the provinces, the provinces as such have nothing to do with improving the trade or benefiting by its profits. Therefore, the essential duty of Government is to organise with a view to improve the salt manufacture in the different provinces.

*Duties of Government*

I think this point was made very clear in the debates of 1925 by Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, who was well acquainted with the conditions of salt production in Madras. Government should undertake research and experiment for improving the quality of salt. You have undertaken research for agriculture in India; what are you going to do in regard to salt? Have you established a Board of Research for salt? Have you made any experiments? If you have, are you prepared to declare and place before us the result of those experiments? Are you prepared to co-operate with us and approach all salt-manufacturers and ask them what their demands are and give them encouragement and help? If you are prepared to do that, there is absolutely no doubt that the manufacture of salt will be improved.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Why don't you move a resolution?

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: Then they must of course conduct their own experiments. Then Government must lower

railway freight for wagons required for conveying salt from one part of the country to another, and Government must make available to salt-merchants empty coal wagons returning from stations in the neighbourhood of salt-producing areas. Then the question comes, what have Government done so far in this direction? Now, there has been considerable agitation and protest going on from Bihar and Orissa and Madras, but I shall leave that topic to be dealt with by my friend who comes from Madras, and to others who come from Bihar and Orissa. I am not going to take that task upon myself here. I will only refer the House to what two Europeans themselves said in the debate in 1925, with regard to the offer of Government to do this salt business. One representative was from Madras and the other from Bombay. I will first read what Mr. Fleming had to say in that discussion. He said :—

“Burma was a considerable producer at one time. Previous to the war, I think, I am right in saying there was a lot of salt coming in from Germany and the actual manufacture only amounted to 12,000 tons a year. Supplies of salt became short during the war and the Government put out very strong efforts to encourage the manufacture of salt locally which I think I am right in saying was brought up to between 40 and 50 thousand tons in 1917. It increased still further until about 1919, just after the Armistice, the encouragement previously given to salt manufacture in Burma was withdrawn, and the reason why it was withdrawn was because the revenue obtained from salt went to the Central Government and the Local Government could not encourage the industry which entailed on them a considerable sum of money in collecting the excise duty.”

With the appearance of War, Government made themselves believe and permitted others to believe it possible

to produce everything in India, but when the Armistice came all this encouragement was withdrawn.

"Mr. Wilson, and others, I believe, referred to the matter of the taste of salt. Salt is put to other uses in several provinces besides eating. It is used for curing hides and salting fish, and considerable quantities of Burma salt was used for the latter purpose. Since the industry has died, the import of foreign salt is evidently considerable, seeing that in the explanatory memorandum the note against the 34 lakhs revenue budgeted for, for the coming year from Burma says, "Chiefly duty on imported salt." The salt is there in Burma and the industry wants encouragement; it will afford employment and a means of livelihood to a lot of people who are at the moment earning rather a precarious livelihood."

That is what Mr. Fleming said. And then coming from Madras this is what Sir Gordon Fraser said:

"The past experiments in the manufacture of fine white salt for the Bengal and Burma markets were failures. But why? Simply because the Government most deliberately and definitely smashed the business, as I shall explain later on."

These are the words which did not come from an Indian, a political agitator, but from a responsible businessman from Madras, himself a European. He says that Government most deliberately and definitely smashed the business.

He says:

"Almost the entire rail traffic between the two places is from north to south, from Bengal to Madras. There are thousands and thousands of wagons going back empty from our Presidency of Madras to the Bengal coal-fields."

*Low Freights*

He comments on the conditions of the coal-fields and it seems to me a very easy matter indeed to grant very low

freights for salt in transit. The Government requires a duty on salt even when it leaves the factory. I will not proceed with that because I learn subsequently that things have been equalised and made easy to a certain extent. Therefore, I do recognise that that particular wrong has been redressed to a certain extent, but not altogether. For whereas at present, I suppose salt is allowed to be taken in ships of a particular tonnage, our demand is that Government should go still lower down and allow smaller ships also to carry on this salt-trade. We do not admit the validity of the reason that is alleged on the side of Government that these shipowners would carry on piracy all along there. After all what are they to gain by carrying on this piracy trade? A commission of five per cent. of the duty. That certainly is not a very large temptation, on the contrary there are difficulties and risks in landing from bunder to bunder on the coast. They would not easily undertake that, if they are solely salt merchants.

Then, Sir, about this debate of 1925, I will say this. Till then the Taxation Inquiry Committee had not made its report. The Committee was already sitting, but had drafted its report when the debate took place in March 1925. That Committee ultimately made its report in December 1925. Therefore, no one could know what view the Taxation Committee would take. In the meanwhile, it was very convenient for Mr. Lloyd to give ample assurance as to what they would do. He said he would sympathetically consider—the usual cant—he would consider every proposal that would be put forward and so on and so forth. I need not repeat them here. But then, unfortunately for the Government, the Taxation Committee made its report in December 1925, and its recommendations went against the cherished principles of

Government. What did the Taxation Committee say? They said:

"The Bengal monopoly was actually given up and an excise system introduced in 1863, but meanwhile the imports had grown from 2 lakhs of maunds in 1835 to 29 in 1861 and to 67 in 1863, and it was soon found that the private manufacturer was unable to hold his own against the importer at equal rates of duty, and the locally manufactured salt almost entirely disappeared and was replaced by salt from Europe, and later from Egypt, Aden and the Red Sea."

That is the process through which the salt trade has passed according to the finding of the Taxation Committee.

*Story of a Starving Boy*

Then, the Committee, in paragraph 176, set forward the reasons why the inland or the shore trade of salt on a small scale suffers on account of the difficulties connected with the absence of bonding facilities and the absence of cheap railway freight. These are the two main reasons why the Indian salt business is suffering. When we talk of railway freights, the Finance Member points his finger to the Railway Member, but the Railway Member is mum. He does not say a single word about it. I do not know what consultations took place between the Railway Member and the inland Revenue authorities. Now that the Railway Member is here, I hope he will make a statement about these difficulties, if there be any. Of course the Government cannot control the shipping trade, and impose particular rates of freight for carrying salt. That I admit. But here again the question of Indian versus British shipping comes in. You want to maintain your prestige and your shipping interests in India; you want to kill Indian shipping and not to give it a chance. Now,

Indian shipping, of course, is small tonnage shipping. It cannot carry on trade beyond a certain limit. These larger ships will not take salt trade in their hands on a smaller scale. Therefore, it comes to this. We have got an adage in Marathi which says:

"The father does not like the son to go out and beg in the streets because his reputation is at stake. The mother does not feed the son because there is no food at home."

This means that between the father caring for his reputation and the mother not having the food to give the boy, the boy must starve. In the same way, the big trade will not undertake the salt business on a small scale, and the small trade is prevented from doing what it can in this respect. How, in these circumstances, can the home salt industry thrive? How is salt to be taken from Madras to Bengal and Burma?

I want just to refer to what Government have been doing. I said that the thing really started in earnest in the debate of 1925. Now, when the debate for 1926 came up, the Taxation Committee's report had been issued in the meanwhile. As soon as somebody on this side of the House asked Sir Basil Blackett what he had done with regard to the salt industry, he took the book up in his hand and said: "This is what we have done." If this is what you have done, then abide by it. You have made the bed and you must lie on it. You will never be true to yourself, or to any committee you appoint. If you appoint a committee, you will negative its recommendations by appointing a special officer. If you appoint a special officer and if he makes recommendations with which you do not agree, then you find some other means of getting out of the situation. Well, here you have the Central Board of Revenue which settles the policy, who were advised



against it. But who were the members of that Taxation Committee? They were: Sir Charles Todhunter, Sir Bijay Chand Mehtab, Sir Percy Thompson, The Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Dr. L. K. Hyder, Mr. B. Rama Rau.

These are all valiant and worthy people. You ought certainly to accept their findings on an important matter like this. You appoint a committee to stabilise the ratio; you appoint the Currency Commission. There were not ten sentences spoken by the late Finance Member, during the course of the debate, before he referred to the recommendations of that Commission. Sir, when you rely on committees, why don't you carry out their recommendations? You will never do it, so long as the report goes against your cherished desires and opinions. You negative the recommendations of the committee which you do not like by appointing a special officer. Now, that officer by himself makes inquiries of some sort. What sort of inquiries we have no idea about. I want to know from the Central Board of Revenue on the floor of this House to what sort of people they sent their invitations, to what mercantile firms they sent the invitations and whether they made any public announcement stating that they were going to make inquiries or conducted any propaganda and whether any questionnaire was issued, and so on and so forth. What were the steps taken by this special officer to come into close touch with public opinion before he made a secret report to the Central Board of Revenue? If we have all information, then we can know if these recommendations are worth anything. What did the special officer do? I think my Honourable friend Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas asked a question in this Assembly whether that report of that special officer would be made public. I do not know exactly what was the reply given

by Government. Perhaps when he takes part in the debate, the Honourable Member will be able to enlighten us on that point. But I distinctly remember, I was myself present at the debate on that occasion, I know the question, but I do not know the reply.

He asked a question as to whether that report was going to be made public, but the report was not made public. This is exactly the question that was asked, Sir :

" Will the report of the special officer be published and circulated to Members of the Assembly when Government have made up their mind about it ?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett : I am not sure in what form the report has been made, but certainly either the report itself or the contents will be made known to the Assembly."

*Indignity of Taxation Committee*

Still, Sir, I think that report has not been published. In the Resolution issued by the Government in 1928 on that special officer's report, it is stated that the report consists only of certain notes. The report made by the Central Revenue Committee is itself based upon certain notes. That is the sort of slip shod answer that has been given, and that is the indignity flung upon the deliberate recommendations made by the people like those who constituted the Taxation Committee. That is your method of dealing with these things. That is the kind of propaganda you make in order to avoid the opinions of people which you know will be of a particular character. You make only a secret propaganda, and you never make a public or open propaganda. That is going to be the manner of your taking the manufacturers into your confidence, and that is going to be the result of your research and experiments. Certainly there ought to be a great propaganda in the country through advertisements in newspapers and:

through bulletins and every manner of propaganda before you come to a decision as to whether there can be an improvement in the methods of salt manufacture.

Of course, I would not go into greater detail or criticise the report. I would leave that to other Honourable Members who may follow.

Coming now to the Resolution issued by the Central Board of Revenue. There was a small debate—not a regular debate—in 1926 when that report was issued. Since 1926 up to 1929 nothing has been done excepting two things. The latest is the Government Resolution issued in 1928 upon the report of the officer; and as I said before, I do recognise that certain equalisation has been effected with regard to bond conditions. But as I said at an earlier stage, I do not recognise equal conditions to be the full measure of equity that is required. You must give certain other facilities in addition to equality of condition. You must have a premium upon your home industry, and it is not open to you to say, "Here are equal conditions for the importer and the home manufacturer: therefore, full equity is done." I do not recognise that principle.

The Central Board say that differences in treatment were in consequence of the fact that bonded warehouses were intended for storage of salt that had not paid duty. Now, Sir, this is a case of one wrong being cited as justification for another wrong. Why were not bonded warehouse facilities given to inland merchants in the first place? Not giving warehouse facilities was one wrong and difference in consequent treatment in point of duty was another wrong. You cannot say that, because you have done this one wrong, therefore you cannot help the other wrong. The question is, why did you do the first wrong in the first place? That is the question I ask. The Board says that merchants are not coming forward to take ad-

vantage of rules permitting bonded salt brought by rail but inquiries were made privately by officials. We refuse to take into account any inquiries made by the officials. I do insist that, in a matter like this where the salt manufacture is spread out through the whole country—in particular parts at any rate—the people ought to know what is being done, and they must be taken into consultation. I, therefore, refuse to believe that attempts or experiments were made and that they have all failed.

*Excuse of Skilled Labour*

Then, Sir, they say there is difficulty in getting labour and skill in the matter of salt production. I find this thing repeated throughout the Report issued by the Central Revenue Committee. As soon as they came up against any reasonable argument, they put forward a special plea and avoid the first argument: as soon as they find that they are going to knock their head against any unanswerable argument, then they leave that argument and put forward a special plea, and say that in that particular place, salt cannot be manufactured. When it is proved that salt can be manufactured, they then put forward the plea that salt of a particular quality cannot be manufactured. If then it is proved that salt of a particular quality can be manufactured, they at once say that labour is not available. If it is proved that labour is available, then they say that skilled labour is not available. If again it is proved that skilled labour is available, they say that the drafting of labour for this matter will result in the diversion of labour from agriculture—as if agriculture cannot take care of itself for the moment. We all know that there is ample labour available throughout all parts of the country. Therefore, what struck me and what I resented most was the special plea put forward by the Central Board Committee in their Report that labour would not be available,

or that skilled labour would not be available, and that, if labour was drafted for this purpose, it would be very much to the detriment of agriculture. I do maintain, Sir, that there is enough of labour in India for satisfying both agriculture under certain conditions and salt manufacture.

Then it was assumed, Sir, that all we suggested for the improvement of this industry was as a War measure. Government need not look upon war as a normal state of things. We do not go on that supposition. War may come once upon a time, and during that period, we may not be able to produce anything at all. But that is after all an exception. But we never bargained for this on the basis of war conditions. Therefore, I say that all that argument found in the Report relating to success or failure in war conditions does not apply at all. We want to look straight ahead to peaceful conditions and without assuming that war is going to come, to attempt at improving successfully the salt business during peace time.

Again, Sir, the Board argue against the grant of protection, because the salt industry is not a basic industry. Look at this argument ! Why is not that a basic industry ? It is not an industry the products of which are utilised as raw products by numerous other industries in India. Then they take up the argument that this industry cannot be sent up to the Tariff Board because it does not satisfy the conditions prescribed for the business being sent up to the Tariff Board for inquiry, that it does not fall within the four corners of the conditions laid down by the earlier commission which recommended such a reference to the Tariff Board and which practically instituted the Tariff Board. Only two days ago, a report came up before this Assembly from the Tariff Board which dealt with the printing type industry. In that Report the Tariff Board actually gave protection to this industry. My point is that

this particular industry, the casting of printing type industry, was actually sent to the Tariff Board and I ask the Honourable the Commerce Member if, in his opinion, that industry is a basic industry and satisfies the conditions required for sending any industry to the Tariff Board, according to the Fiscal Commission's recommendations, I put a straight question and I want a straight answer from him. The Central Board of Revenue make short work of the demand for sending this industry to the Tariff Board for inquiry because, they say, it is not a basic industry. Here I ask, is the type casting industry a basic industry and was it not sent to the Tariff Board for inquiry?

*Summary of Contentions*

In conclusion, I would make these definite contentions by way of summary :

My first contention is that Government have not honestly attempted to make India self-supporting. It has still a soft corner in its heart for the importers. The desideratum could be achieved by Government if it choose to do so. It may choose its own method. We are prepared to hand it over as a monopoly to Government because in that case it will be socialised, it will mean the nationalisation of the industry, the benefits of which would ultimately go to this country. Prices might be fixed and the whole thing taken under Government control. We are prepared to agree if Government want that method to try. On the other hand, if they want to keep up the present mixed system of monopoly of manufacture and also of excise combined, to that also we have no objection, and for this reason, that if these centres of salt manufacture are spread over so many places in the country, it naturally affords openings for labour on the spot. I do not know whether it can exactly be called a cottage industry; whether it is on a sufficiently small scale

or not. I heard that expression from my Honourable friend Pandit Nilkantha Das and, therefore, I use it. Of course you can produce your own salt from a tank just as you catch fish from a tank. That is a different thing. But I do say that, if you have centres of salt manufacture spread over different provinces, the provinces will get back the trade they have lost and there will be so many openings for the employment of local labour. The result will be that Government will enable the people to keep a crore of good rupees in their own hands, and not drive it out of the country.

My main contention is, if India was self-supporting and could meet all her wants of salt-supply in pre-British days, there is no reason why it should not be so under the British Government. The burden of proof lies entirely upon the British Government itself. If it cannot be so, it will only mean ineptitude on the part of Government to achieve even such a small thing for India in her interest. Are Government prepared to make that admission? It is ridiculous and humiliating to accept this as a settled fact, that India cannot be made self-sufficient, even in respect of salt-production. One can understand in certain special matters that India may not be able at present to produce what she wants. There are certain things which require special professional and scientific knowledge of a high order. Take railway engines. You may say, for instance, that railway engines cannot be produced immediately in India. I can understand that. Some things may require large capitalistic organisations for cheap mass production. I can understand that in India you cannot have organised capitalistic organisations on that large scale. Then certain things will depend entirely on local conditions not obtaining in India. I do not know but I am told that it is hopeless to hope for the production of

very high count yarn in India, because the weather conditions in India are not favourable. That is what is said : I don't know myself but supposing it is so, I mention that as an instance of local conditions not allowing a certain thing to be produced in India. You may not be able to produce railway engines immediately and for the present ; but I am not convinced, I am not satisfied, that it is a hopeless business to produce your own salt in this country.

*World's Wonder*

Now I will conclude with only one word. The world has many wonders to show, of which the salt sea is one. The sea is described as the home of wonders. But the sea itself is a greater wonder than all these. Many a man ignorant of science has censured God for creating oceans of salt water instead of fresh water. But this wondering man also atones for his ignorance by interpreting natural wonders in terms of divine beneficence. But there is a greater wonder than even the sea itself, and that wonder is that the British Government, boasting in other respects *of its scientific knowledge and its great training and organisation*, cannot achieve for India even such a small thing as making India self-supporting in point of production of its own salt ! There was a time and fashion in India at one time among Indian politicians, to accept and describe British rule in India, like the sea over which it came, as a divine dispensation. They interpreted it like the salt sea, in terms of divine beneficence. But that view will no longer be maintained when they see that British rule does not give India enough of what is contained for them in the sea.



## The Finance Bill

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar's Speech in the Assembly.*

I wish to address a few words to this House on this, the final reading of the Finance Bill, which is, of course, as we know, the coping stone of the financial design which was unfolded before us on the 28th of Feb. last, though of course we know, at the same time, that the measure of expenses is not necessarily the measure of the revenue that has been asked for by this Finance Bill. In doing so, however, I will not go over again some of the constitutional issues which were discussed, or into the details of the administrative grievances which were ventilated by other speakers in the earlier stages of the Bill on the floor of this House.

But I shall cover entirely new ground; and even then points which are strictly relevant or pertinent to the results of the Finance Bill. I shall only add that, whereas the Finance Member listened to the speeches from these benches at the earlier stage with anxiety, born of doubt or uncertainty about the vote of the House, he can now listen to the speeches on the final stage with his mind at ease, because he knows that he is going to get the supplies he wants almost in their integrity.

An Honourable Member : He will get them whether we vote them or not.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar : Sir, the control of this House on the financial operations of the Government is already extremely limited. But insult is added to injury, when the Treasury benches complain of the time taken by this side of the House over the discussion of the budget and the Finance Bill, and when the heterogeneous allies of the Government benches produce homogeneity in resorting to unparliamentary methods for suppressing the speeches of Mem-

sion of this House, on the assumption that it would be tedious to have a concentrated discussion of the same subject from day to day for four weeks. Then, again, it may be considered whether something could be done to separate completely the discussion of the general administration and the constitutional issues from matters of pure finance, instead of their being mixed up as at present. I feel fortified in my plea for a long number of days for discussion of finance by the fact that, from the Parliamentary proceedings I find that from 50 to 60 days are made available for this business only in that House, and these are spread over a long period from February to August. On the other hand, I find that no less than 12 days are allotted for the discussion of Demands for Grants, even in the Provincial Councils. The writer of the Bombay Report on the working of the Reformed Constitution for 1927 says :

“ Nevertheless these 12 days are not found sufficient for the purpose. There has not been a single budget session when a *considerable portion of the Demands* ( more than one-third) had not to be passed without discussion, owing to the time-limit having been reached.”

But this means that the Bombay Council could boast of discussing as many as two-thirds of the total number of Demands for Grants. On the other hand, how many Demands are discussed in the Assembly in any year ? The discussion on the question of the Army, Executive Council, Secretary of State, etc., of course, has its own use, as they are the principal nerve-centres of the administration. But there are scores of other matters which deserve scrutiny, which are studied by several Members of the Assembly but which are shut out for want of time. It is said by the Poet: “ Culprits are hanged that jury-men may dine.” But in the present case, the phrase may well be varied, and

it may be said that many a departmental culprit among the Demands for Grants for expenditure is "saved by the guillotine," in order that the Government Members may go to attend their club or office. To name but a few, I would mention Interest on Debt and Reduction or Avoidance of Debt, Department of Education, Health and Lands, Commerce Department, Administration of Justice, Agriculture, Industries, Currency, Irrigation, New Capital at Delhi, etc.

*Finance—The Real Crux*

At present there is no encouragement to the study of details by the Members of the Assembly, owing to the fact that the opportunity to speak is more or less a gamble, and convention naturally requires that the Front benches should have their share of time practically reserved. The Chair cannot do all the justice that I know it wants to do to the Back benches, simply because the time at its disposal is short, and it must slice it out as best it may, trying to be fair and equitable to all parties and interests, and true to all established conventions. Among the so-called Back benches, however, you have many earnest souls and careful students, and if this House or the Government do sincerely want to put a premium on assiduous study of such affairs as are brought under the purview of this House, a radical change must be effected in the present disposition of the arrangement about the Assembly sessions, in respect of the total period of time and its distribution.

Legislation is and, of course, must ever be a very important function of this House. The very name, namely, Legislative Assembly, conveys that idea. But the financial business is in effect the crux of responsible administration. As observed by a standard author on this subject :

" It is the financial engine that drives the State along and it is public opinion and public criticism that keep the engine working smoothy and at full power."

The engine house, in the great factory of this organised State of ours, is the Finance Department or Treasury and in that is placed the financial engine which keeps all the machines of the Government at work, turning revenue into public services just as a steam engine turns coal into power. In England and other self-governing countries the people have secured complete control of the Treasury and through the Treasury, the common will of the people is made effective. In India we are at the mere beginning of things, and our understanding of the financial system is about on a par with our control of it. The Finance Minister has, therefore, got to be as much our instructor as our agent, and has thus a great trust to discharge. An unsympathetic expert at the helm can do India very great harm. But we on our part are determined ourselves to learn the intricacies of financial administration and to exercise control over the Finance Member. And for this, we demand full facilities, information, material, sufficient time and full opportunity for organised expression of opinion.

The control of the Assembly over national finance is very limited, and this fact is brought home to the Assembly in many ways. The non-votable expenditure is nearly double the amount of the votable expenditure.

In respect of practically all expenditure, the final authority still rests with the Secretary of State, and the Indian Government has not got financial autonomy even in respect of the non-votable expenditure. As regards the votable expenditure there is the exceptional power of the Governor General-in-Council to restore the cuts made by the Assembly, and in respect of the Finance Bill which

may conceivably be used as a lever of control, it may be noted that many heads of taxation are permanent, and only a few, those not very important, are submitted to the vote of the House. To add to this, the Council of State has got the power to upset decisions of the Assembly and to befriend the Government against the displeasure of this House.

*Control over borrowing*

I may also point out, in this connection, that the Assembly does not enjoy any control over the debt policy of the Government of India. The appropriation of the money raised by way of loans, of course, is included in the annual scheme of expenditure, but the House cannot do any thing beyond expressing its opinion about the policy of the details of the loan transactions. There is, however, no justification for exempting public borrowing altogether from legislative control. The matter has also a constitutional aspect. The Executive can, if it enjoys immunity from the control of the Legislature, in determining its loan policy, increase the burden of public debts without paying due regard to the considerations of economy and the need of keeping the public expenditure within public income. It can always outwit the Legislature, when the latter does not provide funds for certain purposes, by making use of its borrowing powers, more so when all the purposes on which public money is being spent, need not be approved by the Legislature. In England the proposals for raising loans are embodied in a Bill and do not become operative unless it has, like every other measure of legislation, been passed by the Legislature.

These complications must be diminished if the Legislative Assembly should have anything like real control over national finance. It is time that the Secretary of State divested himself of the controlling authority over the finances of the Government of India in the name of re-

ponsibility of Parliament. But since the measure of responsible government in India is to be determined by Parliament according to the declaration of 1917, we cannot entertain high hopes of the liberation of even the Government of India from the authority of the State Secretary even in matters of financial administration. The authority given to the Council of State to raise the Finance Bill passed by the Assembly, is a superfluity or a super-erogation, in view of the exceptional powers given to the Governor General, as we have seen to-day. Further, the scope of the annual Finance Bill must be widened and made broader than it is to-day. As it is, the Customs taxation is not included in the Finance Bill except in respect of any material change, that may be contemplated in the Tariff Schedule. The authority given to Government by standing rules under the Tariff Act is so extensive, that Government need hardly go to the Assembly for any changes in the Schedule; and we may put it down to the desire of Government to show the clamouring Assembly some courtesy or pay the nation some sort of a compliment that the salt duty, postal rates and the important changes in the Customs Tariff are put before the Assembly in the form of the Finance Bill. It must be contended that the submission of a comprehensive Tariff Bill to the Assembly every year may have the effect of unsettling business in the country. But if Government can trust the Assembly with all its imagined whims, vindictiveness and freakful nature, for disposing of taxation proposals involving revenue of 32 crores, they can surely extend the same confidence and offer a larger target for the Assembly's broadside of control every year.

*Burial of the Autocrat*

Sir, I have thus tried to indicate the directions, in which the Indian nation suffers at present from want of

control over its financial administration. But the Finance Member may turn round and say to me, "I am not responsible for this state of things. I cannot change the constitution, and, therefore, must work under it and according to it, so long as it is not changed." This, however, in effect goes very near to the witty slogan of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the father of the House of Commons, who once said, "I will be damned, if I am buried before I am dead." My reply to the Finance Member, however, will be this: If you have any real sincere aspirations for the advancement of the financial freedom of the Indian nation, then the autocrat of the Treasury personally should actively work in co-operation with us not only for the hastening of his own burial, but even for the accomplishment of his own death as an autocrat, and he, in doing so, must not consider himself damned in the operation. Such a voluntary effort towards the divestment by Government of its autocratic powers will only glorify the ever boasted purpose of setting India on her own feet for Self-government.

It may be said that even the Parliament in England does not exercise any greater control on the national finance than the Legislature in India. I do admit that parallel does exist in this respect to a certain extent between the two countries. But that parallel, after all, makes up only one side of the shield, and we must remember that a shield has two sides to it and not one side only. I do admit from what I have read about the way in which the finances are dealt with in Parliament, that the Parliament practically exercises no control over expenditure. That is to say, it has no control (exercised by itself) over extravagance, though it may have some control over irregularities, exercised through the Auditor-General. The only matter of finance, in which Parliament exercises

some control is taxation. But in both these respects, viz. expenditure and taxation, India has, in her present condition, much greater need for control than the tax-payer in England. With regard to the expenditure in England, Sir Herbert Samuel says: "So far as direct control of expenditure is concerned, estimates might as well not be submitted to the Parliament at all". So also Mr. Hilton Young says: "Once estimates have been published the tax-payers' fate is sealed." And here I may read to this House a passage from one other book which makes it a parallel in this matter, namely, want of control over expenditure. I read the passage, for some of the reasons *given there also apply to the state of things here.* The passage says:

"Had it the best will in the world, it has little power. For one thing the estimates do not offer the private member material on which to form an opinion. For another he has not sufficient knowledge. He only knows what he can pick up from outside. The Minister has a skilled staff behind him and all the requisite information at his service: that makes the attack difficult, but what renders it nearly hopeless is that the defendant has been through it all before. It is perfectly certain that the attacker can raise no point which the Minister has not himself examined with its official, or which the Treasury has not queried. The material has been sifted through a *finer sieve* than any which the House of Commons can apply. The private member is further handicapped in that he comes too late. The Government have fixed upon the estimates many months before the discussion, and in their decision the House of Commons took no part. It was then that economy was made or marred, for having once published the estimates to the world, the Government stand or fall by them. Governments are too strong. They use their



strength to the full. If a vote on a big estimate is rejected or reduced, they resign. This looks like accepting the will of the House, but in reality is bludgeoning it."

*Parallel of England*

I am also aware that half the yearly estimates before the Parliament are passed undiscussed. But the Parliament there can afford to do that, for if the electorate found Government to be wildly extravagant, it can and will turn the Government out. On the other hand, it is natural that so long as the electorate chooses to keep its own Government in power and does not upset it, it must trust it.

In India, however, it is quite otherwise. The Indian people do not elect their Government, and, therefore, have no confidence in it. The people know that, within certain limits the Central Treasury and the Accountant General in India do keep a good watch on details of expenditure. But there is no one within the Body of the Government who can control the spending policy of Government from the popular point of view. It may be said that even if the Indian people have Self-government tomorrow, all the present extravagance would not disappear. My reply to that is that, the objection is of course not altogether invalid. Yes, there may be not much economy in expenditure on the whole. I would, even admit the truth of the maxim that democracies are costly, still the people would have the power to apportion the expenditure according to their needs and tastes, and that, after all, the error which you have the liberty to commit and which you commit as a matter of your discretion, is an act of self-realisation and what after all is self-government but political self-realisation?

Having said that much about the want of control in the Legislature in regard to expenditure, I would like to add one remark to my vote on this Bill. If the amendment

had not been made, against which I have voted, then I might not have voted against the whole Finance Bill. In fact, as Mr. Aney made the position clear for my Party the other day, we might not have opposed the Finance Bill, but for the Finance Member committing the mistake of making that amendment. Therefore, I must say that I must vote against the Finance Bill at this stage.

(23-4-1929)

### ◀ The Trade Disputes Bill

*Mr. N. C. Kelkar:—* (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support the motion for re-circulation, and my reasons are briefly these. I am not going to support this motion simply because it is a dilatory motion, that is to say a motion calculated to gain time. There is nobody here in whose favour time is to be gained. Government seem to be determined, on their side, to sit it out and finish the business, and I for one, I may say, have come back from my place now to sit the Bill out, and to finish it if I may, with my presence and vote. But I am supporting this motion, not because it is dilatory, but if we gain time, that little delay might help us in better judging of the merits of the Bill that is before us. I think my Honourable friend Mr. Chaman Lal has made out a very strong case on the ground that the opinion of the workers themselves has not been adequately and fully consulted. Of course, we have got, in the papers embodying the opinions on the Bill, a number of opinions from people who are not so vitally and directly concerned with trade disputes. Occasionally we find reference here and there to an opinion expressed by some one who was more or less directly or distantly connected with trade disputes, but the bulk of the opinions contained in these

papers are from people who are not directly concerned with trade disputes, and there are not very many opinions coming from people who are directly affected by this Bill and who directly suffer in these disputes, namely, the workers themselves.

But, Sir, I stand to support this motion on a special plea, which perhaps might appeal to this House in another view. I am referring to the Report of the Bombay Strike Inquiry Committee of 1928-29, which I have got in my hand. I am not quite sure whether other Members of this House have got copies of this report. Probably I have got it, along with other Members who represent the Bombay Presidency in this House, but the other Members of the Assembly, who do not belong to the Bombay Presidency, have not got copies of it in their hands. My Honourable friend, Mr. Aney, says they have not even heard of the Report. (*An Honourable Member* : "They have.") Perhaps they have heard of the Report but they have not got copies of it in their hands. If they are supplied with copies of this Report, they will get enough material, if they seriously apply their minds to the Report, to decide upon some of the questions which are now contained in the first part as well as the second part of the Bill. There are two main questions involved in this Bill,—the machinery to be set up to settle disputes, that is one, and the second is the appeal clauses which are calculated to put a certain pressure upon the workers not to go on strike etc. In my humble opinion this Report contains very valuable material, almost invaluable material for a man to give his judgment, to bring his judgment to bear upon both of these aspects of the question of trade disputes. At page 170 the Committee themselves put on record what value they attach to this Report and the labour they have spent upon it. In paragraph 10 the Committee say as follows :—

"We have endeavoured to deal comprehensively, and at the same time concisely, with all the wide points that are involved in the questions referred to us for opinion, but we are conscious that we may have failed to notice in our Report some of the arguments raised before us. It would, however, have made it unduly long to deal with everything that was discussed at our sittings, and we believe we have dealt with all the important points. We hope our Report will be of utility."

I want the House to listen to these words—

"We hope our Report will be of utility, not only to the millowners and the workers and their representatives, but also to Government and the public in aiding them to form a proper opinion upon the disputes, which led to this inquiry."

It may be said that this particular Report refers to disputes arising out of one particular section of industry, namely, the mill industry. I quite see the force of that argument, but my reply to that would be, if you go over the points of dispute raised in this particular inquiry, the evidence taken in this inquiry, and the statements of complaints and the manner of removing those complaints, as stated in this inquiry, they will offer material which will be very useful for other people dealing with disputes in other industries also. Just to illustrate my point, I would read out some of the grievances which were discussed by this Committee and upon which judgment has been passed by the Committee, and the House will see that they are practically common to all industries, whether the industry concerns itself with mill textiles, or whether it is an iron industry, or some other industry. For, after all, trade disputes arise out of particular elements of human nature, which are common not only to the textile industry but to all industries. Go to the Tata's Steel Works, go to the mining area where you have got so many disputes, go

to the mill industry. In all you will find that the nature of the disputes is the same, the causes are practically the same, and the manner of dealing effectively with such disputes will always be the same, because all these are dependent upon human nature, which we know is common not only throughout all parts of India but, if I may say so, throughout the world. Therefore, the evidence which is embodied in this particular volume will be fully relevant and will also throw very great enlightenment upon the manner of settling trade disputes in other industries also. In this Trade Disputes Bill we are not certainly dealing with one section of industry. There are services of public utility and so on and so on, and yet I maintain that the elements of dispute and the manner generally of solving them will be practically the same, because human nature is the same whatever the industry or the province in which those disputes occur.

Look at some of the grievances that were put forward before this Committee and which were dealt with by them, and you will at once find that there is a family likeness practically between the grievances put forward here and the grievances which, you are, in any circumstances, likely to meet with in other departments and in other disputes in other parts of India :

" Direct cut in wages: reduction in monthly earnings owing to the following indirect causes :

Introduction of new varieties of cloth at rates which did not bring the level of wages to those earned on the production of the old sorts..."

In reading these, I am sometimes using a substitute word in order to make their application general. I am reading these sections *mutatis mutandis*.

" Reduction of piece-rates to meet unanticipated high production by individual operatives.

"Adjustments in rates made to bring them in line with the rates prevailing in other industries or departments.

No adjustments made to increase rates in cases where mills went on finer counts.

Introduction of artificial silk and inferior raw material.

Gradual withdrawal of bonuses, such as good attendance and efficiency bonus, free railway passes to workers, etc.

Introduction of a method of paying wages on the weight of the cloth after it had undergone a subsequent process, instead of on the actual weight produced on the looms.

Introduction of new methods of work, involving a reduction in the number of operatives employed, notably in some mills, and the fear of the spread of this system to other mills in the city.

The increase in the hours of work of mechanics in some mills from 8½ hours to 10 hours per day, and the declaration of a general intention to level up the hours of work for all mill operatives in all mills to 10 hours per day.

In addition to the above, there were several minor grievances in connection with the infliction of fines, dismissals, the practice of handing over spoilt cloth to the weavers in lieu of wages, etc. It would, we think, serve no useful purpose to go at length into the exact causes of the General Strike, or to attempt to apportion blame for it on either side. There were no doubt various contributory causes."

But the very statement that there were contributory causes on both sides brings me back to my particular plea or contention that the elements underlying any dispute anywhere in India are elements arising from human nature itself, and, therefore, must be regarded as eternal. Therefore, anybody who wants to sit in judgment upon

the merits of a Bill dealing with trade disputes cannot very well afford to go without the assistance of the various useful materials contained in the present Report. I think Government should have voluntarily postponed the consideration of this Bill in view of this Report, if not of the coming of the Whitley Commission. I personally consider that it is a legitimate ground for demanding the postponement of the consideration of this Bill, because there is a good Commission coming and it is expected to go into all matters thoroughly. Why should Government be in a hurry? What is lost by Government or anybody if the Bill is postponed, in view of the coming of the Whitley Commission? But apart from the Whitley Commission we have in this Report very useful material noted down and commented upon by a very responsible Committee, among the members of which there was one High Court Judge, and full and patient hearing was admittedly given to both sides of the textile dispute in Bombay. Therefore, I say here is very useful matter which we cannot afford—I for one cannot afford—to lose, and although I have got a copy of the Report, I cannot say that I have gone through the whole Report because I only recently received it. I want time to read the Report and make use of the material there.

Now there is one thing in particular which will be of great use in bringing our minds to bear upon the Report and it is this question of the eternal human nature. Before the Report came out, there were a number of strikes in 1927 and 1928. The Report was not there and the Committee was not there. The dispute came to an end somehow. It was not a regular "settlement" and it would be interesting to this House to know how general strikes ended before this Report and before this Committee was appointed. I have not the actual figures, but about 25

strikes are noted here, some of which took place in 1927 and some in 1928; and looking at the column of results I find that, except in one case in which the strike ended in a compromise, the Commission notes that the strikes ended in favour of the employers. Now it is difficult for me, as a third party, to understand how about 25 strikes should have all ended in success for the employers when there was so much to be said on the side of the workers also. In this respect I have omitted to mention one other strike, about which it is said that it was merged into the general strike, and the result of course was not definitely known. Now, what I wish to observe about these 25 strikes, in which there was success uniformly on the side of the employers, is that sufficient pressure was not brought to bear upon the employers. In this connection I would like to read just a few words from page 2 of the Report, in which it is admitted that justice was, to a certain extent, on the side of the workers also; that it was not uniformly on the side of the employers, as would be the impression if you go over this column to which I have made a reference. The Committee give a general history of the strikes and then they say :

" To all intents and purposes the strike was a lightning strike, and, to use the words of the *Labour Gazette* for May, 1928, at page 752, 'owing to the strenuous propaganda carried on by certain labour leaders in favour of a general strike by holding mass meetings and intimidating the operatives in the working mills, the number of mills closed began to increase steadily from the 23rd, and by the 26th all the cotton mills in Bombay except one had to be closed and nearly 1½ lakhs of textile workers were thrown out of employment'."

Now, this *Labour Gazette* practically makes it out that the whole blame for this general strike was on the



side of the workers, and not on the employers, but I am glad to find that the Committee has taken a somewhat impartial view of this matter and, after giving this extract from the *Labour Gazette*, the Committee says :

" This, however, should not be taken to mean that the men had no grievances. Had it been otherwise it would not have been possible for a handful of men to keep so many workers on strike for a period amounting very nearly to six months. "

Now, that shows that there can be two sides to a fight, and just as there is some right on the side of the employers, you should expect that there should be some justice on the side of the workers also. Therefore, I again come back to the Report and say that it embodies a number of useful things. The second part of the volume contains the evidence of about 106 witnesses and if there is to be a comparison between the evidence recorded by these witnesses and the opinions which Government have received in these papers, I have no hesitation in saying that the opinions of these 106 persons who stood cross examination before this judicial Committee must have immensely superior value attached to them by any impartially minded man.

Now, I have referred to 17 grievances, and my point was that the grievances would be the same in all industries. The decisions arrived at by this Committee, apart from the evidence recorded in this Report, are also very useful, and there are also specific decisions and results with reference to each particular grievance which was the cause of the strike. That also is very useful in order to enable us to decide whether lightning strikes were justifiable before or not. Supposing the workers had justice entirely on their side, why should they not be entitled to go on lightning strikes ? These poor workers have nobody to

befriend them, and they are pitted face to face with powerful employers. If justice is entirely on the side of the workers, why should they not use the only method that they have got in their hand—of going on a general and lightning strike? Therefore, a perusal of this Report would give an insight to us to judge how far the measures proposed in the present Bill are justifiable or are not justifiable.

Now, I would like to mention another point. The point has been raised as to why Government should be in a hurry with this Bill. I am going to give you the reason for this. Neither the employers nor the employees are, at this particular moment, in a hurry to proceed with this Bill. Here is Mr. Chaman Lal, speaking for the labour world, and the absence of my friend Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas in his place is evidence enough to show that the employers do not care that this particular Bill should go through immediately. If he were anxious, as an employer, to proceed with this Bill, he would have been present at his place. I do not think it will be denied that Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas is a great employer himself.

*An Honourable Member:* He has paired.

*Mr. N. C. Kellar:* He would not have paired if he had thought this Bill to be of such importance. Therefore, I maintain that it is clear evidence of the fact that the employers do not want to proceed with the Bill. Here is Diwan Chaman Lal speaking on behalf of the workers, and he also does not want to proceed with the Bill. Therefore, the only party which is in a hurry to proceed with this Bill is the Government. I will give you the reasons for their hurry. It has been admitted by the Member in charge that the present Bill is based upon the English Act. Now that Act was passed, as the members will remember, after the general strike of 1926 in England.

In my last speech on the Public Safety Bill I dealt with this point and pointed out that it was Sir John Simon who played mischief with regard to the general strike, by using his little agile legal finger and throwing the whole burden on the shoulders of the workers. The Labour Party was afraid, at that time, to cope with judicial decisions against them in a matter like this, because the trade union funds were in jeopardy. That was the reason why the general strike was called off. It was not called off because there were no merits on the side of the workers. Now, what happened after that was that the Conservative Government came forward with this Bill, and passed it in spite of the opposition, tooth and nail, by the Labour Party. That is the point to be remembered. If my memory serves me aright, the leaders of the Labour Party, though they did not advise a general strike like that, still opposed this Bill in Parliament. In fact, they avowed that, if they again came into power, they would repeal and do away with the Act. I ask the House to rivet its mind on this declaration by the members of the Labour Party in Parliament. The significance is this and it will also clear the position as to why the Government is in a hurry. The general election is coming on in May next. Who knows that the Labour Party may not come into power? And who knows that, if they do come into power, they may not make up their mind and apply their energies to this Act? Immediately they come into power, they will make themselves responsible, I fancy, for introducing a Bill for repealing the present Act. Now, Government knows this very well, as well as we do. So, they are proceeding in a hurry with this Bill as the Labour Party may come into power and do away with the present General Strikes Act, on which the present Bill is based. If that happens, and supposing this Bill were postponed till September and the

Labour Party succeeds in doing away with the present law on the Statute Book, the whole of this Bill will fall to the ground. Government, therefore, are in a hurry. (*Applause from the Swarajist Benches.*) Therefore, my point is this, that neither do the workers want to proceed with this Bill, nor do the employers want to proceed with it; it is only the Government who want to proceed with it for the particular reason I have just mentioned. Even if it is only for that malicious end, I will oppose the Bill and support the dilatory motion.

(2-4-1932)

## Maharashtra's Support To Nehru Report

*Mr. N. C. Kellkar's Address*

(The following is the summary of the presidential address delivered by Mr. N. C. Kelkar at the Maharashtra All-Parties Conference held in Poona on the 18th November, 1928.)

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We meet to-day as an All-Parties' Maharashtra Provincial Conference to consider and discuss the Report of the Nehru Committee. Much propaganda has already been done in the Maharashtra on this subject. A number of meetings were held in October all over the Province, and specially in Poona, in connection with the boycott of the Simon Commission; and although the main purpose of these meetings was to express popular resentment against the Simon Commission, occasion was naturally taken incidentally also for expressing public approval of the Nehru Committee's Report. Destructive and constructive work may sometimes be complementary of one another, when both are actuated by or directed towards a common purpose.

And so it has been with the negative attitude of the public towards the Simon Commission and its positive attitude towards the Nehru Committee's Report. The two together present a complete picture of the political mind of India at this moment.

The volume of public opinion expressed so far throughout the length and breadth of the country has proved the fact, that the Nehru Report not only appeared at the right psychological moment but has also practically given a shape and form to the detailed national demand for 'responsible government' so as to win for it the approval of most of the more prominent political parties in India. I do not want in any way to belittle the fact that organised and strenuous opposition is also being expressed to the Report in certain quarters. But the opposition has failed to harm or injure the *main positions of the Report*, for the simple reason that the opposition was never directed or even meant to be directed towards those positions. This crucial fact seems somehow forgotten not only by the enemies but also by some of the friends and well-wishers of the Report. And, therefore, I would for a moment specifically deal with this aspect of the question.

Now speaking analytically what is the *Report* in question? Its spear-point or operative part is a scheme of full responsible government for India. The Report does not concern itself with making out at length a case for that demand. For that has been done convincingly during the last so many years, from time to time, by the Indian National Congress and other Leagues and Associations. The well-known memorandum of the Members of the old Supreme Legislative Council, the Congress-League Scheme of 1916-17, the Assembly Demands of 1924-25, even the Montford Scheme of Reforms and the Government of India Act of 1919, all these presupposed not only

a national demand for responsible government in India, but the necessity of conceding it by Government early or late. The Nehru Report in its introduction only passingly answers some of the latest objections and false issues raised by certain official or foreign critics. The real report is the 87 net Recommendations dealing with a proposed form of Indian Constitution, including the Declaration of Rights, the Indian Parliament, the Provincial Legislatures, the Commonwealth and the Provincial Executive, the Judiciary, the Civil Services, Finance, National Defence and Foreign Relations.

Now is there, I ask, any conflict in Indian public opinion on these *main points* as determined in the Report? That conflict rages mainly around the point of representation, the point, that is to say about the distribution of seats in the Legislative bodies and the formation of electorates through whom that distribution is to be realised. Incidentally also, but as a very minor matter, there is some conflict of opinion about the point of the redistribution of Provinces. But it should be observed that the recommendations of the Nehru Committee on these points are not included in the *main body of the recommendations*. The meaning of the deliberate treatment of this kind given to these subjects is obvious. The Nehru Committee itself regards the particular manner in which electorates are formed, and distribution of seats in the Legislature is effected, as a matter of secondary importance, the primary matter being the immediate establishment of *responsible government* of the Dominion Status in India. Can anyone say that Pandit Nehru and his colleagues would flatly refuse to have anything to do with such Self-government, supposing it were offered immediately but was made contingent on their acceptance of separate and communal electorates to start with, though of course we see clearly

pictorial creations of other people, without ever applying their own brush to the canvas for producing the honest picture of their own mind and fancy. The only thing that they have so far been able to draw on the board is the uncouth and dishonest formula of "progressive realisation of responsible government." That is how they pretend to believe that Self-government can be given to India only by instalments and after repeated examinations. But to this dishonest casuistry, the far seeing Tilak had already provided with a crushing reply in a singularly cryptic sentence, when he taught every Indian to say "Swarajya is my birth-right and I shall have it." The point about Mr. Tilak's *mystic mantra* is that, real human or national birth-rights cannot be parcelled out in instalments, or realised after repeated examinations or inquiries !

When the principle of self-determination emerged out of the Great War, it did not emerge so qualified and limited by instalments and examinations. The smallest nations were to be given their freedom, if simply they so demanded it, without any inquiry as to their fitness or unfitness or stages of fitness. Their freedom was to be conceded to them at once, for the simple reason that they were nations and were entitled to freedom as a matter of national birth-right. I would here cite Mr. W. Churchill who in his famous speech in the Parliament, made even 8 years before the Great War broke out, on the subject of Transvaal Constitution, rebuked the Conservative Government for the assumption that representative government is the first proper step to responsible government and that it is a convenient stage in the transition to full Self-government. "The whole experience of British Colonial policy," said Mr. Churchill, "does not justify such an assumption. The system of representative

government without responsible ministers, without responsible powers, has led to endless friction and inconvenience wherever and whenever it has been employed. It has failed in Canada, it has failed in Natal and Cape Colony. It has been condemned by almost every high colonial authority who has studied this question... "Lord Durham in his famous report said: "It is difficult to understand how any English statesmen could have imagined that representative and irresponsible government could be successfully combined." Warming up to the debate Mr. Churchill said: "It is said, why should you give responsible government to the Orange River Colony also?" I say "Why not? Let us make it quite clear that the burden of proof always rests with those who deny or restrict the issue of full parliamentary liberties...." ".....How often in the history of nations has the golden opportunity been allowed to slip away! How often have rulers and governments been forced to make in foul weather the very journey which they have refused to make prosperously in fair weather?....." If the population of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, both Boer and Briton, by a large majority desire this Self-government, even although it might seem to us to be premature, I should think is unwise to refuse it." Why should the British Government not echo the words of their own present Chancellor of the Exchequer and give an open-handed pledge to India, that whatever the Hindus and Mahomedans will demand together that shall be at once conceded? And if that is done I am sure, the differences between these two communities will instantaneously vanish because they will then know what they have to gain by their unity. Or shall I not, even as things are at present, say and claim that the 87 net recommendations of the Nehru Committee Report, being practically accepted



unanimously by all the communities in India. Government should come out with a declaration that they will accept that part of the scheme in the Report as unanimous and give effect to it, reserving to themselves full liberty to give separate or joint electorates, and make or not make reservation of seats, as they like, and also distribute seats in legislative bodies as they may think best, without accepting the view in toto of either the Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs or the Depressed Classes ?

The treatment being given to India is thus neither the treatment that was given to the smallest nations in Europe by America and the European powers or to the Colonies by the British Government in their own Empire. For India alone must be reserved, it appears, the humiliation of insulting instalments, elusive examinations, concessions by compartments and melancholy investigation of mathematical minima in political privileges. That is precisely the reason why India is determined not to take lying down the subterfuge and the trickery of the Simon Commission. And that is also why people of all shades of opinion are enthusiastically supporting the general principles and the broad details of the Nehru Report scheme, though they may not be prepared to swear by every word of the scheme. I will go further and say, that it may be possible to write out a better or more plausible scheme of responsible government than is contained in the Nehru Report. And I dare say there are anglicised Indians in India, who can perhaps write the contents of the Report in better English. But I do not think that a scheme could be prepared at this time in India, which is likely to secure a more united support from the existing political parties.

Now if the opposition of the Mussalmans and the Depressed Classes to the Nehru Report has so little ad-

verse significance, much less so is the significance of the opposition of the Independence League. I am glad that the threatened split has been avoided and an understanding arrived at the Delhi A. I. C. C. meeting between these two wings of the Congress Party. But even supposing it was not so, who but a hair-brained fool would interpret the conflict between them as really *harmful* to the Nehru Report? On the contrary I think the cause of the Dominion kind of Self-government is rather only strengthened by the activities of the Independence League. Probably Mr. Shrinivas Iyengar himself also meant as much, on the ground of George Herbert's maxim that "he who aims the sky shoots higher much than he that means a tree." Surely how should Government interpret the idea of the Independence League as anything but a distinct warning to themselves that, if even Dominion Status were not conceded to India they would have to reckon with people who, like De Valera in Ireland, would keep up the fire of an agitation for independence itself?

(15-11-1923)

**By the Same Author**

( *In Marathi* )

(1) **Biography of the late Lok. B. G. Tilak.** (लो.टिळक यांचे चरित्र )

Vol. I. (1923)—pp. 600. Rs. 3-0-0.

Vol. II & III (1928)—pp. 1200. Rs. 4-0-0

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(2) **The Marathas and the English.** (मराठे व इंग्रज)  
pp. 300. Rs. 2-4-0.

A critical study, by the historical method, of the relations between these two people from the year 1600 to 1818. The book was published as the Centenary Volume in the year 1918 which ends the first century after the fall of the Peshwai.

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(3) **History of Ireland.** ( आयरलँडचा इतिहास ) (1910)—  
pp. 300. Rs. 2-0-0.

This contains a survey of Irish history upto the times of Mr. Redmond as the Irish nationalist leader, together with biographical sketches of prominent Irish leaders.

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(4) **Boquet of Prose Flowers.** ( गद्यगुच्छ ) (1927)—  
pp. 200. Rs. 1-8-0.

Book prescribed for studies for the B. A. Examination  
by the Bombay University,

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(5) Wit and Humour. (सुभाषित आणि विनोद) (1911)-  
pp. 150. Rs. 1-4 0.

This book was described by the Dakshina Prize Committee as a scientific treatise which for the first time introduced the subject of Wit and Humour to the Marathi reader.

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(6) The Last Quinquennial. (गेली पांच वर्षे) (1927)-  
pp. 600. Rs. 2-0-0.

This is a collection of writings and speeches on the subject of the Non-Cooperation movement brought upto the establishment of the Responsive Co-operation Party in the Deccan and Berar and C. P.

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(7) Miscellany-Educational. (शिक्षणविषयक लेख)  
(1926)—pp. 400. Rs. 2-0-0.

This is a collection of articles and speeches specially on the subject of National and other systems of education.

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(8) Collection of Kelkar's Writings. (केळकरकृत लेखसंग्रह) (1914)—pp. 600. Rs. 2-0-0.

This book contains mostly select articles from the Kesari and is made up of four sections as follows :—(1) Cultural; (2) Religious and Social; (3) Political; (4) Miscellaneous.

(9) **Rambles in the Historical Field.** ( इतिहास-विहार ) (1926)-pp. 200. Rs. 1-8-0.

This is a handy collection of special contributions on the subject of History.

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(10) **The Indian States.** (संस्थानी राजकारण) (1929) pp. 200. Re. 1-0-0.

This is a collection of special contributions on topics connected exclusively with the affairs and politics of Indian States.

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(11) **The Revolt of the Pretender.** ( तोतयाचे वंश ) (1912)-pp. 123. Re. 1-0-0.

This is a historical drama dealing with the fatal adventure of an ambitious person who pretended to be the self-same Sadashivrao Bhau Peshwa, who led the Maratha armies at the battle of Panipat in 1761 and was lost in the melée but was supposed to be alive for some years afterwards. The play turns upon the credulity of the noble widow of Sadashivrao Bhau and the statesmanship of Nana Phadnavis.

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(12) **Chandragupta.** ( चंद्रगुप्त ) (1913)-pp. 144. Re. 1-0-0.

This is a dramatic romance in which the theme is connected with the fortunes of the great Chandragupta, the

contemporary of Alexander the Great, and the high political craft of the celebrated fiery and haughty Brahmin Chanakya.

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(13) **Krishnarjuna-Yuddha.** (कृष्णार्जुन-युद्ध)  
(1914)—Re. 1-0-0.

This is a high class comedy in which dramatic form is given to the spirited story of an armed fight between Shri Krishna and Arjuna, which proves the theme that even life-long friendships can be put in peril by an exaggerated stress laid on self-love and self-respect.

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(14) **Amatya Madhav.** (अमात्यमाधव) (1915)—  
pp. 130. Re. 1-0-0.

This is a dramatic version of an imaginary incident in the life of the great Madhavacharya alias Vidyaranya Swami, who was the founder of the Kingdom of Vijayanagar. It is partly an adaptation of Lord Lytton's Richelieu.

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(15) **Vir-Vidambana.** (वीरविडम्बन) (1918)—pp.  
108. Re. 1-0-0.

This is a dramatic satire showing the fate of braggarts who ride high horses of vanity but come to grief in action. The drama is based on the incidents of the Uttara Grahana in the Mahabharat. In it is dramatised the ordeal of the Pandawas of a twelve months' life in disguise

at the royal Court of Virat ending in a battle with the Kaurawas where was exposed the braggart Uttara who spent his life in the pursuit of fine arts in a harem.

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(16) Saint Bhanudas. (संत भानुदास) (1919)—  
pp. 112. Re. 1-0-0.

This tells in a dramatic form the story believed by the devotees of the Vithoba of Pandharpur, to the effect that the idol of Vithoba was taken away from Pandharpur by force of corruption by Krishnadewaraya, the King of Vijayanagar, but was restored to Pandharpur by the efforts of the Saint Bhanudas, who was favoured by the Deity. This drama depicts the life of the common people at holy places and is a satire on the traditional origins of Devasthanas and their mismanagement by irreligious covetuous greedy managers.

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(17) Letters from London. (बिलायतर्ची वातसीपत्रे)—  
(1920)—pp. 200. Rs. 1-4-0.

This is a collection of letters written by Mr. Kelkar from London and addressed to the Kesari, Poona. They were written between April and November of 1919 when he went to England as a Member of the Congress and Home Rule League Deputations. They contain many other matters, besides political news.

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(18) Kavyopahara. (काव्योपहार) (1927)—Annas 6.  
This is an incomplete section of stray verses and

poems, presented to the Marathi Literary Conference held at Poona in that year.

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(19) **The Revival of Sanskrit Learning.** (संस्कृत विद्येचें पुनरुज्जीवन (1926)—pp. 93. Annas 8.

This booklet contains the history of the past and present position of Sanskrit Pandits and the state of Sanskrit learning during the last 300 years.

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(20) **In Memoriam to Lok. Tilak.** (लो. टिळकांचें पुण्यस्मरण ) (1926)—pp. 150. Re. 1-0-0.

This contains an appreciation of Lok. Tilak and his work and his place in Indian politics. The book also contains various lectures delivered by Mr. Kelkar on various occasions in the Non-Co-operation movement on the subject of Tilak, his work, and memorial.

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(21) **The Life of Garibaldi.** (ग्यारीबाल्डीचें चरित्र ) (1902)—pp. 200. Rs. 1-8-0.

This is a short biography of the hero of Italy written in a popular style for the use of the young generation.

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(22) **Short Stories.** (कथासप्तक) pp. 150. Rs.-1-4-0.

A collection of seven stories some of which are written by Mr. Kelkar and some written by Mr. S. K. Kolhatkar, the famous Marathi dramatist and critic.



( *In English* )

(23) **The Tilak Trial.** (1908)—pp. 600. Rs. 2-0-0.

This is an authorised report of the great trial, containing documents, evidence etc., with an introduction and a character-sketch of Mr. Tilak. (This book is proscribed).

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(24) **The Case for Indian Home Rule.** (1918)—pp. 125. Rs. 2-0-0.

This was published by the Poona Home Rule League as an introduction to the demand for Swarajya to be placed before Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu, who toured India after the proclamation of 1917.

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(25) **The Contempt of Court Case.** (1924)—pp. 60. Annas 8.

This is an authoritative report of a case against Mr. Kelkar, when in 1924 he was hauled up before the High Court of Bombay for having committed contempt of Court.

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(26) **Landmarks of Lokamanya's Life.**—pp. 200. Rs. 1-8-0.

This book comprises certain articles reproduced from the Mahratta written on important occasions in the most eventful life of Lok. Tilak.

(27) A Passing Phase of Politics. (1926)—pp. 260,  
Rs. 1-4-0

This contains certain articles reprinted from the Mahratta, being a history of the Non-Co-operation movement from 1920 to 1923 Sept. *i. e.* from the Special Session of the Calcutta Congress to the capturing of the Councils by the Swarajya Party.

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